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THE INDIAN CATASTROPHE: MP MIGRANTS' CRISIS AMIDST COVID-19

A Report prepared by Madhya Pradesh Migrant Volunteer Team
in collaboration with Zenith Society for Socio-Legal Empowerment

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INSPIRATION AND THE JOURNEY

The Madhya Pradesh Migrant Workers Project was initiated as an attempt to lend an ear to the distressed blue-collar migrant workers in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic. In hindsight, we did not anticipate that this initiative would become such an integral part not only of our lives but also of many others.

The last twelve months have been bitter-sweet as we witnessed innumerable moments of extreme joy, for instance, in cases where we were able to extend actual financial and other support to those in need. However, on other days, we felt helpless and dejected, so much so that we questioned our collective ability to make a change.

It began in August 2020, when we started discussion on the Covid-struck Indian economy and one of its worst-hit victim groups – the migrant workers. A sudden nationwide lockdown had resulted in the shutting down of workplaces and industries. Millions of migrant workers lost their source of livelihood, faced food shortages and lived in the fear of an uncertain future while ineffective transport services further added to their difficulties.

From the onset of the pandemic, the state machinery failed to anticipate, and adequately provide for, the needs of the migrant workers. The more alarming fact was the non-accountability from government on lack of data. We realized that a crucial aspect of the migrant crisis was the lack of critical data on circular migrants in terms of their identity, employment information, institutional support received and other details pertinent to their livelihood. Governments, both at the state and central level, lacked an understanding of the magnitude of this issue and thus could not anticipate the scale of the migrant exodus.

All these instances made us realize the importance of systematic data for effective policy formulation and implementation. Through this report, we tried to document the hardships faced by migrants who were forced to return to Madhya Pradesh. What sets this report apart from others is the fact that all observations and recommendations hereunder are based on actual findings from the ground. Our team interacted with the migrant workers on a personal basis to understand their side of the stories. This gave us access to authentic information about practical problems faced by them in accessing help and existing gaps in legislations that further exacerbated this situation. The findings of this report are crucial for future policy decisions as it presents the situation from the perspective of the migrant workers.

We hope that this report amplifies hardship stories and experiences of migrant workers during the lockdown and paves way for protection and enforcement of their rights in future. The report includes personal testimonies and detailed analysis of their journey from Maharashtra to Madhya Pradesh. The report also contains certain reference points for an in-depth review aiding long-run strategies and short-term measures for restoring workers' rights and integrity, especially during unprecedented times.

Rakshita Agarwal and Rohit Sharma
MP Migrant Project, 2020-21

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea of this report was first discussed in August 2020. We were able to materialize our thoughts into a concrete plan with the support of Abhay Jain and Swapnil Shukla from Zenith Society for Socio-Legal Empowerment, who helped us undertake this initiative at a state level. We would also like to thank Lakshay, being the earliest supporter joining us in this cause and helping us build a structure of this report.

We would like to extend our warmest gratitude to Mr. Sourav Rai from Agami India for firmly believing in us and extending help at each step. We are also thankful to Ms. Nupur Sinha from the Centre for Social Justice who helped us finalise the questionnaire that formed the basis of our report. We also received invaluable inputs from Shrikrishna Upadhyay for the initial structure of this report.

One important fact about this report is that more than 70% of our entire team was comprised of women volunteers. Right from contacting migrant workers directly (via calls) to volunteering for other stages of this report, this work would not have been possible without these strong women.

Volunteer team – Sample collection

Our splendid volunteer team is undoubtedly the backbone of this report. They undertook the most important part of collecting responses from migrant workers. These amazingly hardworking volunteers were:

Aavika Agarwal, Aditya Ashok Agrawal, Ami Shah, Anshika Jhamb, Anshuman Patra, Anushka Nagpal, Aparna Singh, Apoorv Shukla, Archit Rohit, Ataliya Kalam, Avishi Srivastava, Ayushi Verma, Bhavya Jain, Bhubaneswari Routray, Devanshi Batra, Devika Mishra, Divyesh Rao, Gitanjali Mathrani, Hardik Batra, Harshita Agarwal, Harshita Kushwah, Himani Nandal, Indrayani Bhadra, Isha Agrawal, Khushi Jaiswal, Laksh Sharma, Mohammad Aquib Zafar, Nidhi Jha, Niharika Tiwari, Nikita Datla, Nitesh Sikarwar, Prakriti Bhardwaj, Prathamesh Desale, Perna Kashyap, Ranu Tiwari, Ravleen Kaur, Rushikesh Barje, Shachi Shah, Sharique Uddin, Shikha Rai, Shivani Chaurasiya, Shivansh S, Shreya Chaturvedi, Shreya Tiwari, Shreyaa Mohanty, Shrijaya Singh, Shriya Singh, Shubhra Adyasha Mahanta, Smruthi Rajagopal, Sneha Mishra, Suraj Agarwal, Sushil Joon, Sushmita Sen, Urvi Singh, Vaishnavi Agarwal, Vaishnavi Paliya, Vidhi Gupta, Yash Chandola, and Yashika Kapoor.

All of these volunteers dedicated their time to make a change with no expectations in return. We also want to thank Girl Up Chapter of Jindal Global University for providing some of their volunteers in support of this initiative.

We feel it is imperative that we mention the names of those who went beyond the call of duty and helped us increase our sample size by covering migrant workers from multiple districts single-handedly. Ataliya Kalam, Indrayani Bhadra, Nidhi Jha, Nikita Datla and Sushmita Sen – thank you, your contribution has been invaluable.

We would also like to specifically thank Niharika Tiwari for her constant support at all stages throughout this project.

Core team

Once we achieved the target sample size for the project, the next important step was to break the data down and present our findings in a simple yet effective manner.

It was indeed a tedious process and we would be forever grateful to Lakshmi Menon, Niharika Tiwari, Shilpa Shankar and Saiyed Kamil for their efforts. The current report is the culmination of efforts and months of hard-work of these people.

Labour law team

In light of India's complex labour law regime, assessing the findings of the project was possible only because of the efforts of Tanvi Chitranshi (Co-ordinator), Saurabh Rajurkar, Lakshmi Menon, Priyesh Verma, Sushmita Sen, Ranu Tiwari, and Harshita Kushwah.

We are indebted to Prof. Saurabh Bhattacharya from West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences (WBNUJS), Ms. Anusha from the Centre for Social Justice and Mr. Nikhil Iyer for their constant support and guidance on the understanding of labour laws for the purposes of this report.

Story writing team

The M.P. Migrant Workers Report is much more than just findings and analysis. It is also about the small things that the migrant workers experienced and shared while interacting with us. We came across different kinds of stories, as narrated by different people, and felt that these experiences formed an integral part of the report. We would like to thank Aavika Agarwal, Aishwarya Chandran, Indrayani Bhadra, Ranu Tiwari, Harshita Kushwah, Nidhi Jha and Suraj Agarwal for capturing these stories so beautifully and presenting them to the world.

Distress call relief team

We had a wonderful team of Arjun Ghosh (Co-Coordinator) and Lakshmi Menon (Co-Coordinator), Devanshi Batra, Ravleen Kaur, Surupa Das, Suraj Agarwal, Sushmita Sen, Aavika Agarwal, Abhishek Chandra, and Laksh Sharma who dedicatedly received distressed calls and arranged for help in the most difficult situations.

RTI and annexure team

We also want to express our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to Suraj Agarwal for filing innumerable RTI queries, Divyesh Rao for seamless logistics support, Lakshay, Shachi Shah and Shreya Chaturvedi who helped us with the Annexures.

Data and graph team

Another important team comprising of Nidhi Sharma, Lakshmi Menon, Lakshay and Niharika Tiwari worked tirelessly to put in place all graphs and data and make the report illustrative. We also want to thank the Zenith Society for Socio-Legal Empowerment for providing us with the primary data that resulted in this comprehensive report.

People behind the lens

All of the pictures used in the report were captured by Akshay Kapoor, Vivek Chugh, Harsh Gupta, Rajesh Balouria, and PDPics. We are thankful to Paul Thottan for designing the cover page of this report.

Reviewers

We also want to thank our reviewers including Maansi Parpiani, Kavya Bharadkar and Divya Varma from Aajivika Bureau, Anusha and Gatha G. from Centre for Social Justice, Nikhil Iyer, Varun Kannan, Shreshth Tomar and all others who agreed to spare some time and reviewed the report multiple times. Finally, we want to thank our families for being patient with us as we continued working on this report for around a year.

We dedicate this report to all the migrant workers who lost their lives, jobs and livelihood to this pandemic, in the hope that this makes their lives better in some way.

*Rakshita Agarwal and Rohit Sharma
MP Migrant Project, 2020-21*

OVERVIEW

The outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic brought life to a standstill worldwide. It exposed the inadequacy of global healthcare infrastructure and questioned existing capabilities to meet exigencies of such nature. While nations were imposing lockdowns and enforcing social distancing norms, India was battling a unique problem of its own: the migrant workers' crisis induced by Covid-19.

Internal migration, including both inter-state and intra-state migration, is prevalent in India. It is a common phenomenon for the Indian rural population to move to urban areas in search of better job opportunities. The 2011 Census of India pegs the total number of internal migrants in the country at a staggering 139 million.¹ The announcement of a sudden nationwide lockdown meant that these migrant workers were stranded in their host states of work, far away from their homes and families. With the transport facilities being discontinued, these migrant workers had nowhere to go. Most of them had already lost the means to sustain themselves as a result of the shutting down of workplaces. After much hue and cry, the government intervened and introduced transportation facilities to help them reach their home states. However, no concrete steps were taken to ensure that the returned workers found employment opportunities. The state failed to recognise that mere transportation of the migrant workers was not sufficient. It was equally important to ensure that such workers were able to sustain themselves and lead a life of dignity.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The M.P. Migrant Workers Project was initiated with the objective of filling the existing data gap in terms of the current employment status and living conditions of migrant labourers who returned to Madhya Pradesh during the lockdown. It also aims to know the extent of state intervention and aid provided to these workers throughout the process - starting from their journey from host states to settling in their respective villages.

Besides aiming to make us aware of the ground realities, the findings of this report are important as they hold the potential to guide policy decisions and legislations concerning migrant workers. A 360-degree analysis of the current approach will help us identify the strengths and weaknesses of the existing system and help us be better equipped to deal with such situations in the future.

METHODOLOGY

The observations from the empirical study have been made based on data collected directly from about 2943 migrant workers spread across 52 districts of Madhya Pradesh.

We started the exercise with the preparation of a comprehensive questionnaire containing around 50 questions on basic details of the respondents, their condition before Covid, their travel experience, current situation, financial assistance received and so on.

Before we started a full-fledged empirical study, we conducted sample callings by contacting around 250 people chosen at random. Our volunteers could get around 25 responses out of this list which suggested a 10-12% conversion rate of getting a response i.e., for every 10 entries, there was a possibility of getting only one legitimate response.

Once the final questionnaire was finalised, we entered the response recording stage. Our team contacted a tentative number of 25000-30,000 people. However, roughly around 10% i.e., a total of 3147 responses were recorded in all districts of Madhya Pradesh. The reasons for this low conversion rate are multifold, with the primary reason being incorrect numbers of migrants and multiple migrants registering through the same phone number. In some cases, calls were picked by residents of Maharashtra who informed us that someone registered through their number when the lockdown was going on.

Out of these 3147 responses, 2943 responses were confirmed to be legitimate migrant workers. The remaining entries were rendered invalid because of several reasons including but not limited to multiplicity of similar entries, incomplete information, error in identification of migrant workers etc. A

¹ Data on Migration 2011, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, Available at <https://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/migration.html>, Last seen on 24/04/2021.

large number of people contacted by our team turned out to be IT professionals or engineers particularly in Ujjain, Bhopal and Indore and hence we could not cover 100 entries in these three districts.

Districts where we got 100 responses: Balaghat, Betul, Chhindwara, Damoh, Dindori, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Katni, Khandwa, Mandla, Morena, Panna, Rewa, Sagar, Satna, Seoni, Shahdol, Shivpuri, Sidhi, Singrauli, Umaria

Districts where we contacted every entry: Agar, Alirajpur, Anuppur, Ashoknagar, Barwani, Bhind, Burhanpur, Chattarpur, Datia, Dewas, Dhar, Guna, Harda, Hoshangabad, Jhabua, Khargone, Mandsaur, Narsinghpur, Neemuch, Niwari, Raisen, Rajgarh, Ratlam, Sehore, Shajapur, Sheopur, Tikamgarh, Vidisha

Districts where some sheets were skipped in view of volunteers' safety: Bhopal, Indore and Ujjain

LIMITATION OF THIS STUDY

The study does not have adequate sample size for female respondents. Only around 8% of the total surveyed respondents identified themselves as females.

The study also does not have enough sample size from some of the prominent cities such as Alirajpur, Bhopal, Indore, and Ujjain.

Additionally, this report relies on self-reported data from migrant respondents, which may affect the external verification of these findings. Moreover, some of the questions in the questionnaire were such that they allowed volunteers to use their discretion while filling in responses. As a consequence, we received inconsistent results for similar questions based on the level of expertise and training of each volunteer.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Demographical information: Of the total surveyed respondents

Category – Around 34% of the respondents belonged to the General category, followed by 31% belonging to the Other Backward Class category. Around 15% of the respondents were Scheduled Castes and another 15% identified themselves as Scheduled Tribes.

Gender - 92% of the total respondents were males and 8% were females. 4 respondents preferred not to disclose their gender.

Age - Majority of the respondents (83%) belonged to the working-age group of 15 to 34 years. Within that, the highest number (around 45%) fell in the range of 25 to 34 years.

2. Employment trends: With respect to the status of employment, the majority of respondents (around 56%) admitted that they were unemployed since their return to Madhya Pradesh.

Furthermore, respondents from the General category had the highest chances of being employed, and respondents belonging to the Scheduled Tribe category were least likely to be employed. With respect to gender, males stood a higher chance of finding jobs post Covid, as compared to their female counterparts.

The findings of this report thus bring forth the continuing relevance of factors like gender and caste/category that plague employment opportunities, especially in rural India.

3. Industry of engagement-based analysis: During the pre-Covid era, the majority of respondents (around 40%) were engaged in the infrastructure development industry. This changed during the post-Covid era, wherein a majority of the employed respondents (around 37%) worked as labourers. It is pertinent to note that only 10% of the total respondents were employed in the labour industry in the pre-covid period as compared to the 37% after the pandemic.

This engagement shift in favour of the labour/worker industry is worrying. As per the responses received, the labour industry has been one of the least paying industries both before and after Covid. More than 60% of the respondents engaged in the labour industry earned below-average income² at any given point in time.

4. Positive correlation between education and employment: A combined analysis of the education and employment status responses before Covid indicated that more educated respondents secured better-paying jobs. It was observed that respondents who were educated were more likely to be falling in higher-income brackets – around 25% of the respondents earning more than Rs. 650/day were graduates.

However, interestingly, there was no perceptible correlation between the employment status of the respondent's post lockdown and their educational qualifications indicating widespread unemployment stress amongst people with varying education qualifications alike.

5. Trends in income: The post-pandemic period saw a dip in the average income of the respondents. The data is especially alarming for lower-income earners, as only 7% of the respondents earned less than Rs. 250 per day pre-pandemic, as compared to 35% in the post-pandemic period.

6. Gender disparity and pay gap: The data collected reveals that female respondents were more likely to be given daily wages than employment with a fixed income. Even before Covid, the share of female respondents employed as daily wage earners was around 12% more than their male counterparts.

² For the purposes of this part, average income is understood to be between Rs. 350-Rs.400 per day.

The above finding is relevant in light of the positive correlation established between the kind of employment (fixed-term v. daily wage jobs) and the income associated with each of these types. As per the responses received, people employed in fixed-term jobs were more likely to earn an above-average income.

It is also pertinent to note that majority of female respondents (around 70%) formed a part of the average or below average income groups during the post-pandemic period.

7. Shortfalls in government policies and Covid specific initiatives:

(a) Transportation

In the wake of the Covid pandemic, the Madhya Pradesh (M.P.) government introduced measures to aid the transportation of migrant workers. In furtherance of the same, an M.P. migrant workers online registration portal was launched allowing stranded migrant workers to register themselves and avail Shramik trains and bus services run by the state government.

Majority of the respondents (around 70%) stated that they registered themselves through the online registration portals. Around 57% of the respondents further stated that their travel tickets were entirely funded by the state government. Despite these measures being useful for the majority, there were complaints regarding lack of transport coordination between the drop-off railway stations and place of residence. Resultantly, around 12.5% of the respondents admitted that they were forced to walk back to their villages (either some part of the journey or the entire journey) in the absence of state-sponsored alternatives.

(b) Scheme coverage

Despite various employment schemes introduced by different governments, it was observed that only around 1% of the respondents were covered such schemes in the state of Maharashtra. Even after the pandemic, the coverage of state employment schemes remained dissatisfactory. Only 1.7% of the total employed respondents said that they found employment under one of the employment schemes in M.P. Interestingly, there were no female beneficiaries under the M.P. specific employment schemes.

(c) Monetary assistance

The M.P. government had also announced a Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) scheme under which it promised Rs. 1000 to each returning migrant worker as financial aid. However, this initiative remained largely unimplemented with 88.5% of the respondents stating that no such amount was ever transferred to them. Amongst the 11.5% who did receive DBT, many mentioned not receiving the full amount.

(d) Supreme Court directives for resettlement and future employment

In June 2020, the Supreme Court mandated all states to maintain records of incoming migrant workers and document crucial details such as their names, address, nature of their skill, and place of earlier employment. The state officials were further required to set up counselling centres and reach out to returning workers for employment opportunities.

Around 64% of the respondents said that their basic details were registered by government officials while entering M.P. However, majority of respondents (around 87%) stated that they were never contacted by government representatives in relation to any possible employment opportunities. Amongst the very few respondents who were approached by state representatives, around 95% said that the information shared by such officials was not useful from an employment perspective.

Furthermore, the majority (around 74%) also stated that no awareness/sensitisation programs were conducted and that state counselling centres, as required under the Supreme Court directives, were also not set up.

(e) Policy failure and implementation gap

Despite the government's noble intent of helping incoming migrant workers by setting up online portals for registration, an analysis of this measure from a policy perspective yields that such portals were not helpful.

Almost half of the respondents (50%) said that they did not possess smartphones or any other device with an internet connection to register themselves on these portals. Out of the respondents registered for travel, around 60% admitted that they were helped by government officials and civil societies for online registration.

The non-availability of internet and/or smart phones, and the glaring digital divide, had far-reaching implications on the employment opportunities of returned workers.

The M.P. government had also introduced a 'Rozgar Setu' portal to provide employment to incoming workers. Despite the government's efforts, around 56% of the respondents remained unemployed even after several months of return to M.P. This could be attributed to several reasons, including but not limited to: (i) lack of assistance/support from authorities in the form of counselling centres/ awareness programs (as observed above); (ii) demotivation for employers to hire workers from a government platform as that would have subjected them to greater scrutiny; and (iii) improper measures introduced by the government (introducing online measures, a pre-requisite for which are smart phones and an internet connection, may not have been the policy decision in view of the fact that the target audience was vulnerable migrant workers).

ANALYSIS OF LABOUR LEGISLATIONS IN INDIA

The predicament of labourers during the pandemic elucidated gaps in the Indian labour law regime. The existing labour laws of India have been critiqued on several occasions in the past for being complex and archaic, with inconsistent provisions. Many of these criticisms were in line with the data findings of this report, highlighting the incompetence of extant laws in ensuring a safety net for migrant workers. None of the existing labour legislations in India adequately deal with inequalities faced by migrant workers employed in the informal sector on account of their category/caste or education.

In light of the above, this report identifies and highlights loopholes in the existing labour law regime which have a direct bearing on Indian migrant workers.

- 1. Limitations of applicable legislations:** India has a limited number of legislations covering migrant workers employed in the informal sector. The applicability of such sparse laws is also limited because of the manner in which these laws are worded.

For instance, Section 2(e) of the Inter-state Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 defines inter-state migrant workers as those recruited by contractors alone. This narrow interpretation of the term 'inter-state migrant workers' excludes a large number of workers from its benefits who migrate on their own without the assistance of a contractor.

Similarly, the Madhya Pradesh Unorganised Workers Welfare Act, 2003 is one of the very few labour legislations regulating the informal sector but is not fully exploited on account of the benefits being available only to members of the 'welfare board' established under the Act. As per the provisions of the Act, only those workers who reside in an area of MP for at least 12 months are qualified to be members of the welfare board. Such a requirement automatically disentitles migrant workers travelling to other states from availing benefits under the Act.

- 2. Payment of wages below the minimum wage rate:** As per Section 13(1)(b) of the Inter-state Migrant Workmen Act 1979, an inter-state migrant workman has to be mandatorily paid as per wages fixed under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948.

The minimum wage rate in India differs from state to state. In the state of Maharashtra, the minimum wage payable to unskilled workers is fixed at Rs. 381.54 per day. However, approximately 42% of the surveyed respondents received wages at rates lower than Rs. 350 per

day while they were in Maharashtra. Even after their return to M.P., 37% of the employed respondents received wages at rates lower than minimum wages fixed for unskilled workers for the state of M.P.

- 3. Lack of social security and protection:** The Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 directs the Central Government to form schemes for unorganised workers on matters relating to life and disability cover, health and maternity benefits, old age protection, and any other benefit as may be determined by the state government. These benefits aim to provide a minimum level of social security to workers in the unorganised sector.

Despite such provisions, the migrant workers lacked adequate social cover. Even welfare schemes announced at the state level, such as the M.P. government's initiative of monetary assistance to returning workers, were not implemented properly.

There could be several reasons for paltry implementation of welfare schemes both at the central and state level, including but not limited to: (i) lack of data availability on migrant workers, (ii) lack of political and administrative will, (iii) articulation of schemes as benefits as opposed to legally enforceable rights, (iv) tedious and complex process for registration of workers (which require state government resources and manpower), (v) inadequate sensitisation.

Resultantly, migrant workers are unable to access these benefits as they fall in an administrative blind spot, wherein they neither have information on these schemes nor the necessary documents to avail them.

THE GENDER AND CATEGORY QUESTION

The term 'migrant worker' is generally used as a gender-neutral and caste-neutral term. Resultantly, while addressing issues relating to migrant workers, problems specific to the gender and caste/category of a worker are often overlooked.

However, in reality, gender and category of workers shape every stage of their migration experience. Understanding and addressing the gender and category-specific problems faced by migrant workers is crucial to ensure their amelioration in the truest sense. Some of these specific issues have been identified as under:

- 1. Menstrual hygiene** – During the pandemic period, it was observed that menstrual hygiene products were largely unavailable for female migrant workers during their journey. The issue is pertinent as the sample size illustrates that almost 99% of the female respondents fell in the age bracket of 15 to 54 years which is also the menstruating age for women. Some female migrant workers complained of facing hardships during their travel on account of menstruation and further developing Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) because of the unhygienic conditions.
- 2. Education, employment and gender** – An analysis of the responses received reveals that female respondents not only had lower levels of education across various categories, but they were also more likely to get daily wage jobs and less income as compared to their male counterparts.
- 3. Education, employment and caste/category:** The survey data indicates that General and Other Backward Class category respondents had better access to education, as compared to respondents from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe categories. However, this inequality in access to education did not translate into inequality in employment, especially in low income jobs. During the pre-Covid era, it was observed that all categories were equally represented in terms of employment. This however changed in the post-Covid period, where the Covid induced uncertainty affected the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities more as compared to General and Other Backward Class category respondents.

We need redistributive, equalizing, and holistic policies and legislations to address the various issues faced by migrant workers. The conceptual framework of labour, migration and social-policy making should address gender and category concerns at all levels (including but not limited to education, healthcare, digital divide).

I. DEMOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Age-bracket

Age-bracket	Number of Respondents (Total 2869 Responses)
15-24 years	38% (1084)
25-34 years	45% (1291)
35-44 years	13% (376)
45-54 years	3.5% (100)
55-64 years	0.5% (14)
Above 64 years	0.14% (4)

Table 1: Age-bracket (2869 responses)

- Out of the 2869 respondents, the highest, around 45% (1291 responses) belonged to the 25-34 years age-bracket, followed by around 38% (1084 responses) belonging to the 15-24 years age-bracket.
- Around 83% (2375 responses) of the respondents who migrated were between the ages of 15-34 years.

2. Gender

- Out of the 2927 respondents, around 8% (228 responses) were females while 92% (2695 responses) identified themselves as males. 4 respondents preferred not to disclose their gender.

2.1 Gender and Age-bracket

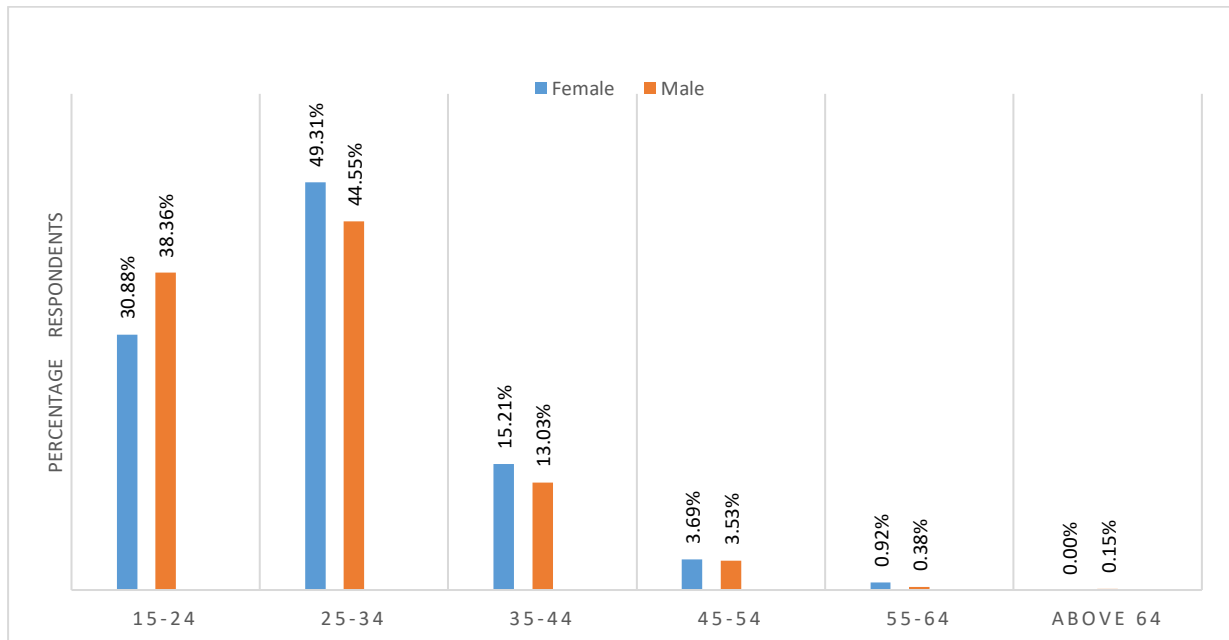


Figure 1: Gender and Age-bracket (2927 responses)

- More than 80% of female respondents (174 responses) and male respondents (2183 responses) were less than 35 years of age.
- Additionally, out of 4 respondents who didn't prefer to disclose their gender, one respondent was in the 15-24 age-bracket while three respondents were in the 25-34 age-bracket.

3. Category³

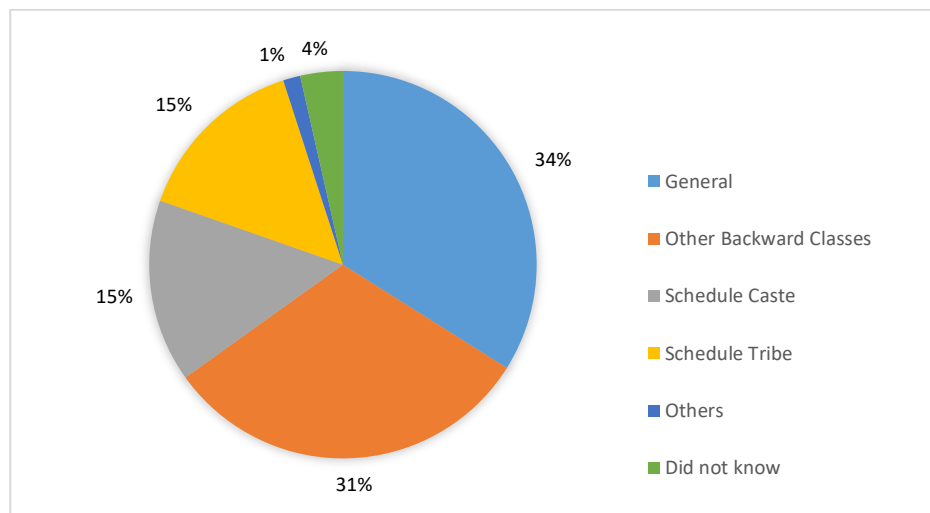


Figure 2: Category of respondents (2658 responses)

- Out of the 2648 respondents, 34% (899 responses) belonged to the General category, followed by 31% (825 responses) belonging to the Other Backward Class category (hereinafter referred to as “OBC category”). Around 15% (404 responses) were Scheduled Castes (hereinafter referred to as “SC category”) and another 15% (388 responses) were Scheduled Tribes (hereinafter referred to as “ST category”).

3.1 Category and Gender

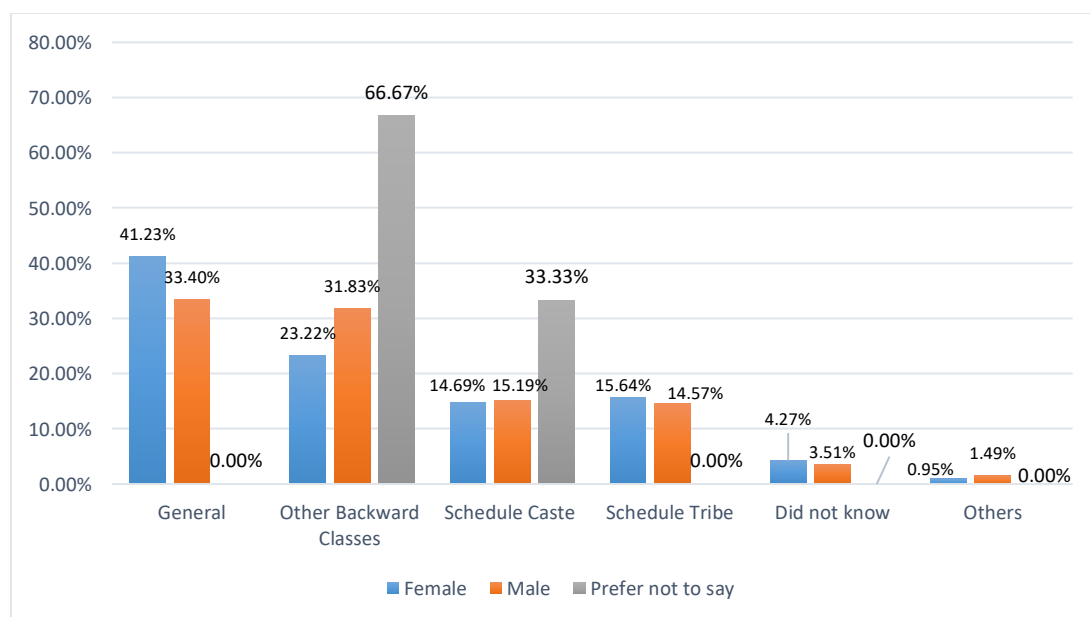


Figure 3 : Category and Gender (2636 responses)

- Out of 2636 responses, around 65% (1580 responses) of male respondents and 65% (136 responses) of female respondents belonged to the General category and OBC category collectively.

³ For respondents who mentioned castes and sub-castes, the classification has been done as per the state lists under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for the state of Madhya Pradesh. The lists are annexed herewith as Annexure 1.

3.2 Category and Age-bracket

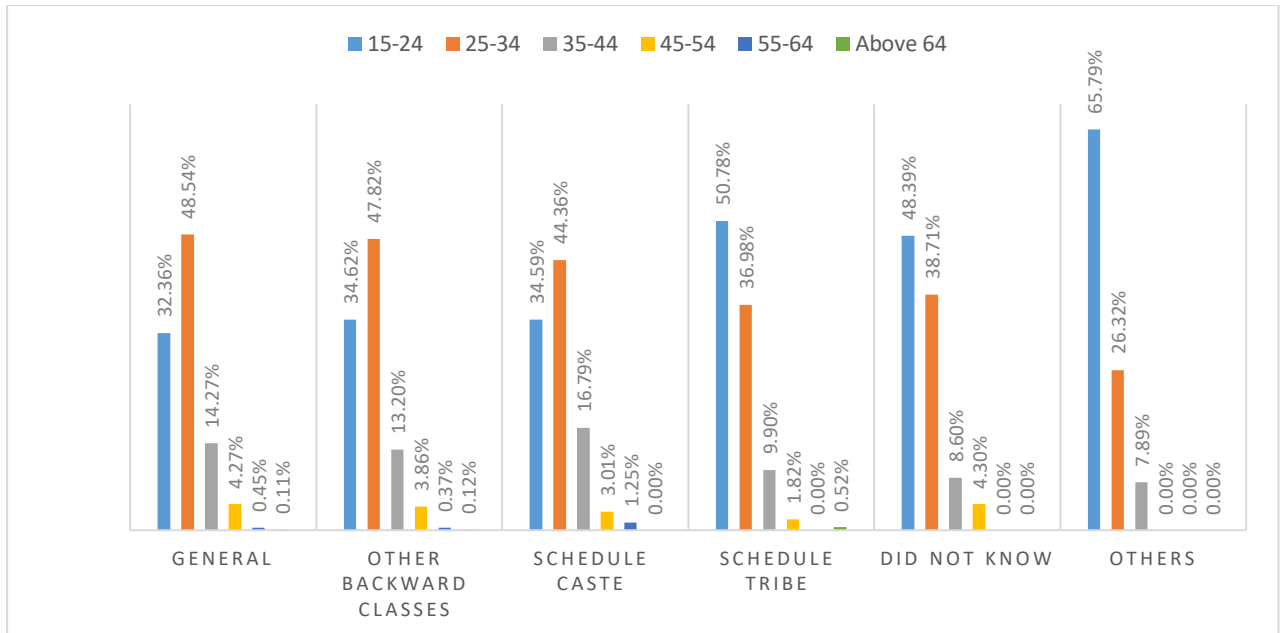


Figure 4: Category and Age-bracket (2607 Responses)

- The ST category had the highest proportion, with around 88% (337 responses), falling within the age-bracket of 15-34 years.
- The SC category had the highest proportion, with around 88% (337 responses), in the age-bracket of 35 years and above.

4. Education⁴

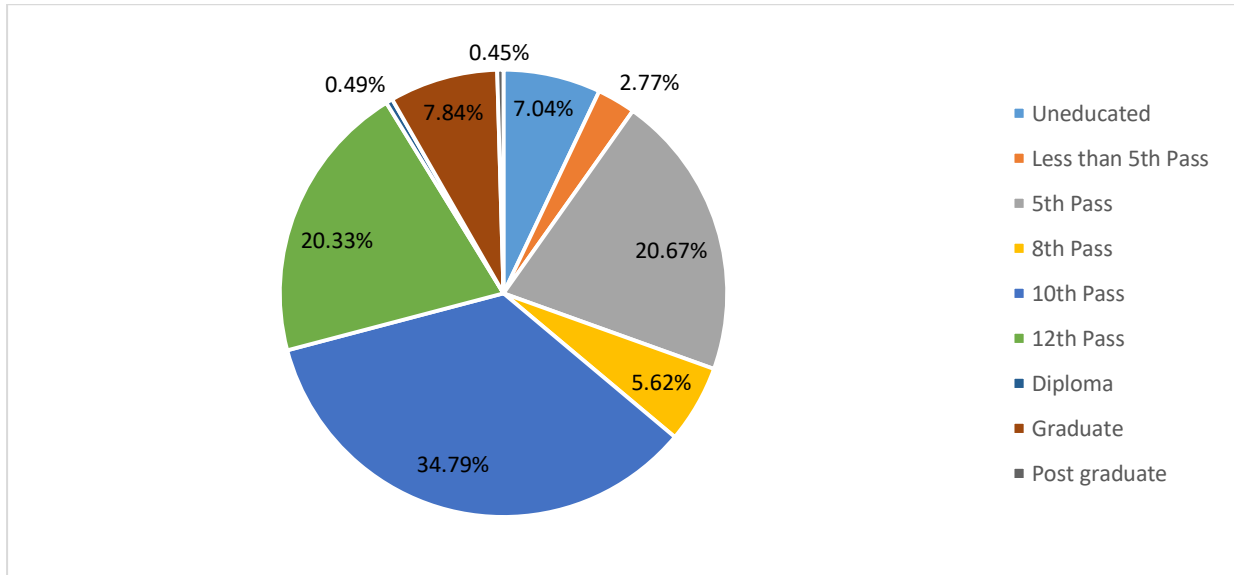


Figure 5: Education (2883 responses)

- Out of the 2883 respondents who answered about their education qualification, around 64% (1842 responses) had completed the education till class 10th. Around 10% (283 responses) were either uneducated or less than 5th pass.

⁴ For respondents who mentioned educational qualifications, a detailed list is annexed herewith as Annexure 2.

4.1 Category, Education and Gender

Gender Category	Educational Qualifications									Grand Total
	Uneducated	Less than 5th Pass	5th Pass	8th Pass	10th Pass	12th Pass	Diploma	Graduate	Post graduate	
Female (Total 199 Responses)	20.10%	8.04%	39.20%	1.01%	17.59%	8.04%	0.00%	6.03%	0.00%	100.00% (199)
General	11.63%	9.30%	43.02%	0.00%	22.09%	6.98%	0.00%	6.98%	0.00%	100.00% (86)
Other Backward Classes	18.37%	10.20%	26.53%	2.04%	18.37%	14.29%	0.00%	10.20%	0.00%	100.00% (49)
Schedule Caste	22.58%	6.45%	45.16%	3.23%	9.68%	9.68%	0.00%	3.23%	0.00%	100.00% (31)
Schedule Tribe	42.42%	3.03%	42.42%	0.00%	12.12%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00% (33)
Male (Total 2283 Responses)	5.43%	2.37%	17.83%	6.40%	35.96%	22.65%	0.57%	8.28%	0.53%	100.00% (2283)
General	3.50%	1.88%	16.65%	3.50%	42.05%	24.78%	0.25%	6.63%	0.75%	100.00% (799)
Other Backward Classes	5.37%	2.23%	17.80%	5.50%	35.21%	21.07%	0.92%	11.39%	0.52%	100.00% (764)
Schedule Caste	8.15%	3.80%	22.55%	10.05%	30.43%	17.12%	0.54%	7.34%	0.00%	100.00% (368)
Schedule Tribe	7.10%	2.27%	15.63%	11.08%	29.55%	26.99%	0.57%	6.25%	0.57%	100.00% (352)
Grand Total	6.61%	2.82%	19.54%	5.96%	34.49%	21.47%	0.52%	8.10%	0.48%	100.00% (2482)

Table 2: Category, Education and Gender (2482 responses)

Gender-wise observations

- Around 67% (134 responses) of the female respondents had the educational qualifications of 5th pass and below. It was substantially higher for male respondents who were around 27% (585 responses) with the same educational qualifications.
- Out of the 31 female SC category respondents, around 74% (23 responses) were with educational qualifications of 5th pass and below. On the other hand, out of 368 respondents who were males belonging to SC category, around 35% (127 responses) had similar educational qualifications of 5th pass and below.
- Similarly, out of the 33 female ST category respondents, around 88% (29 responses) were uneducated. On the contrary, out of the 352 respondents who were males belonging to the ST category, only around 25% (88 responses) were uneducated.
- Three respondents who answered this question and preferred not to disclose their gender had the educational qualifications of below 5th pass. Out of these three respondents, two belonged to the OBC category and one belonged to the SC category.
- The above findings indicate that a higher level of education was accessible to male respondents than female respondents.

Category-wise observations among female respondents

- The above table indicates that among females, there was a higher lack of access to education for SCs and STs with 23% (7 responses) and 42% (14 responses) of the respondents respectively being uneducated.

- This proportion is substantially high when compared to the female respondents belonging to other categories where only around 12% (10 responses) of General category female respondents and only around 18% (9 responses) of OBCs category female respondents were uneducated.

Category-wise observations amongst male respondents

- The above table also indicates a lack of education for SCs and STs with around 8% (30 responses) and 7% (25 responses) of the respondents respectively being uneducated.
- The above numbers indicating lack of education for STs and SCs are significantly higher when compared to the male respondents belonging to other categories. In other categories, only 4% (28 responses) of General category male respondents and only 5% (41 responses) of OBC category male respondents were uneducated.
- The above findings indicate that education was more inaccessible for the females belonging to SC and ST categories as compared to their male counterparts in the same categories.

5. Family members and number of dependents

- Out of 2890 respondents, around 57% (1662 responses) had 5 or less than 5 family members and around 26% (748 responses) had family members between 6 to 7 members. Around 17% (480 responses) had 8 or more family members
- To understand the extent of economic responsibility, the surveyed respondents were further inquired about the number of family members who were dependent on their income. It is important to note that the term ‘dependent’ here refers to those family members of the concerned respondent who relied solely on the respondent’s income for sustenance.
- Out of 2726 respondents, around 62% (1703 responses) had up to 4 family members dependent on their income, around 31% (840 responses) had between 5 to 7 dependents on their income, and around 7% (183 responses) had 7 or more dependents.

5.1 Dependents and Gender

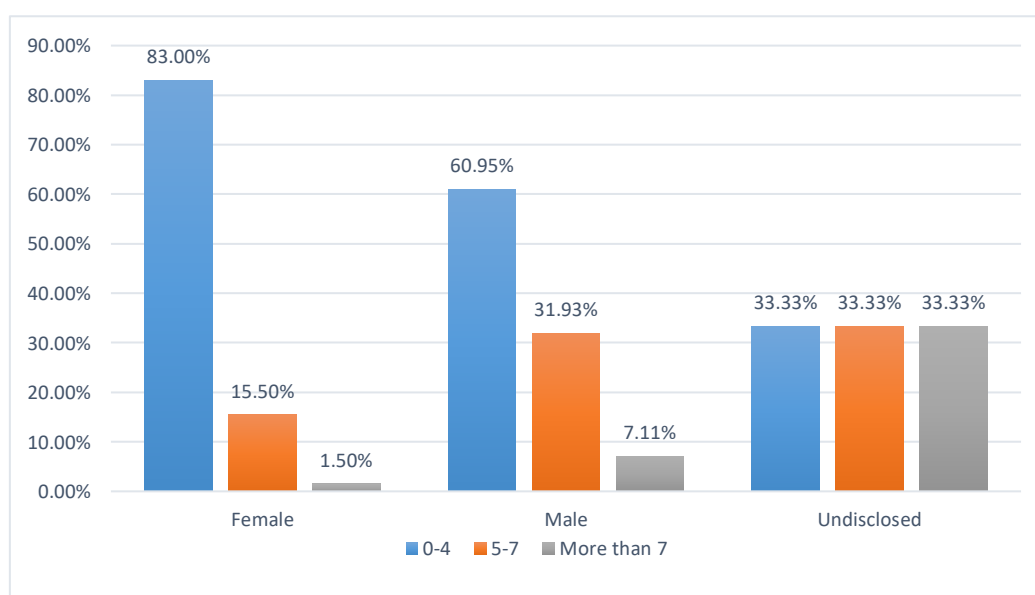


Figure 6: Dependents and Gender (2713 responses)

- Out of 2510 male respondents, around 39% (1058 responses) of male respondents had 5 or more dependents on them. This figure is much lower for female respondents where out of 200 respondents, 17% (34 responses) had 5 or more dependents.

5.2 Dependents and Category

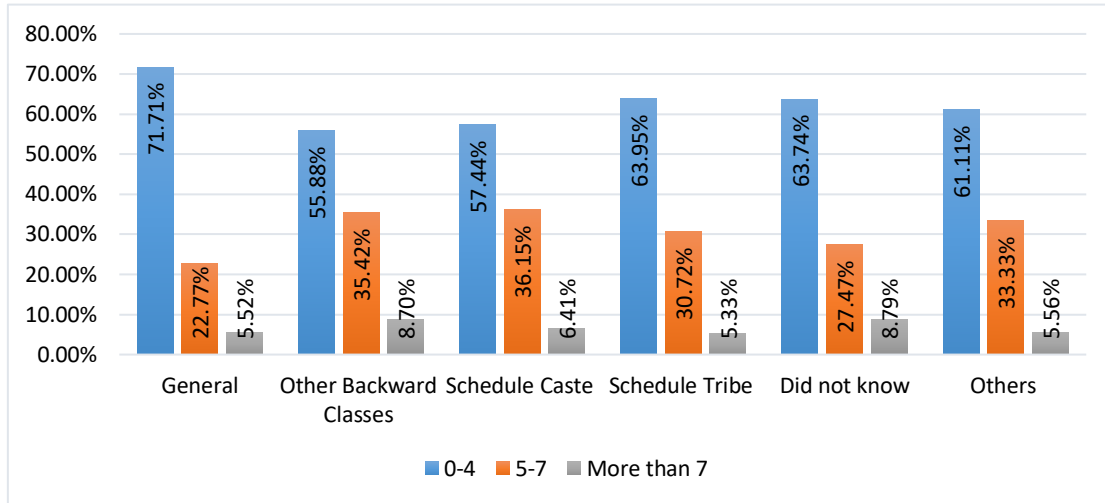


Figure 7: Dependents and Category (2476 responses)

- Amongst the respondents having 5 or more dependents, respondents belonging to the OBC category had the highest proportion with around 44% (347 responses), followed by SC category respondents with around 43% (166 responses). This was further followed by ST category respondents with around 36% (116 responses). The General category had the lowest proportion with around 28% (242 responses).

6. Documents in possession

Name of the Documents	Number of Respondents having access to documents
Aadhar Card	98% (2867 responses)
Bank Account (for direct benefit transfer schemes)	72% (2105 responses)
Residential Proof	35% (1026 responses)
Ration Card	63% (1837 responses)
Job Card (Under MGNREGA)	17% (500 responses)
Any Madhya Pradesh Employment Card	3% (95 responses)
None	0.8% (23 responses)

Table 3: Documents in possession (2914 responses)

- Out of the 2914 respondents, around 17% (500 responses) possessed job cards under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) and only 3% (95 responses) possessed employment cards issued by the Madhya Pradesh government.
- Around 63% (1837 responses) of the respondents possessed ration cards indicating their ability to buy food grains at subsidized rates.
- These findings indicate that around 80% (2319 responses) did not possess job cards under MGNREGA and Madhya Pradesh employment cards. This may act as a potential barrier to employment opportunities for returning migrant workers

6.1 Employment card and Category

Category	Number of Respondents
General	13.84% (124 of total 896 responses)
Other Backward Classes	19.83% (163 of total 822 responses)

Schedule Caste	17% (68 of total 400 responses)
Schedule Tribe	33.42% (129 of total 386 responses)
Did not know	14.90% (14 of total 94 responses)
Others	10.52% (4 of total 38 responses)

Table 4: Job card and Employment card (2927 responses)

- The highest percentage in terms of access to job cards was observed in respondents belonging to the ST category (33.42%) followed by OBC category respondents with the least percentage (13.84%) being observed in General category respondents.
- Out of the 386 ST category respondents who answered this question, around 33% (129 responses) had employment cards.

II. PRE-COVID SITUATION

7. Kind of employment⁵

- Out of 2895 respondents who responded to the question regarding kind of employment, around 44% (1284 responses) were daily wage earners, around 55% (1582 responses) earned fixed income and around 1% (29 responses) did not have a fixed earning pattern or preferred not disclosing it.

7.1 Kind of employment and Gender

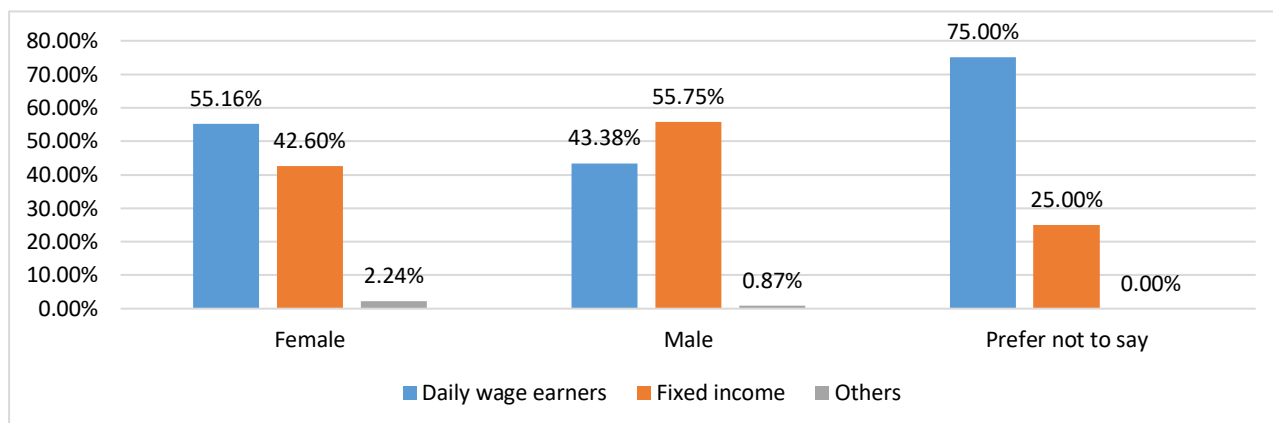


Figure 8: Kind of employment and Gender (2880 responses)

- The share of female respondents employed as daily wage earners was around 12% more than their male counterparts.
- Similarly, the proportion of male respondents earning fixed income was around 13% more than their female counterparts.
- These findings indicate the workforce gender disparity that prevails in terms of the kind of employment opportunities available to female respondents.

7.2 Kind of employment and Category

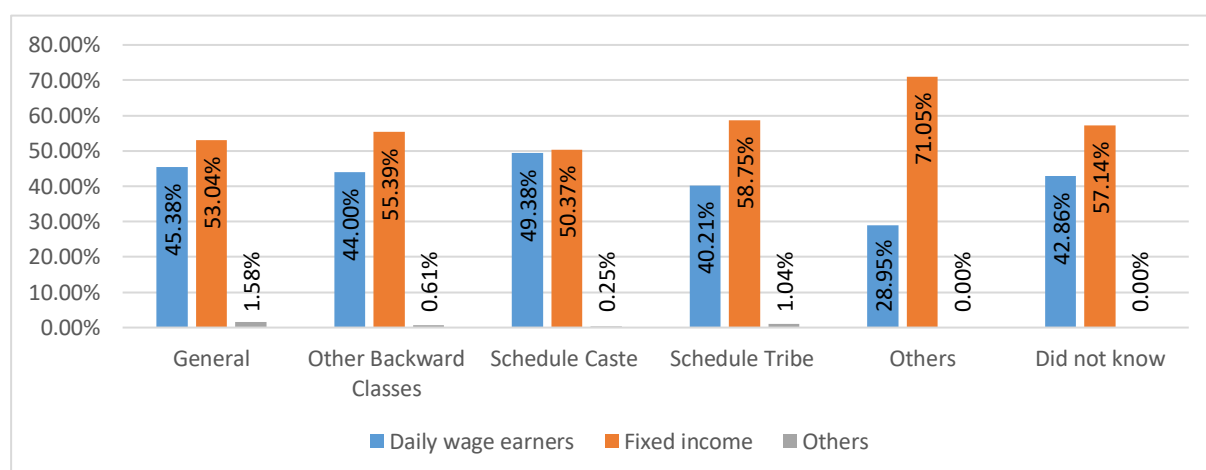


Figure 9: Kind of employment and Category (2617 responses)

⁵ For respondents who mentioned their type of employment a detailed list including 'Daily Wage earners', 'Fixed Income' and 'Others' is annexed herewith as Annexure 3.

- The split between fixed income jobs and daily wage jobs was substantially similar across categories, barring respondents belonging to the SC category, who had the least access to fixed income jobs.

7.3 Kind of employment and Education

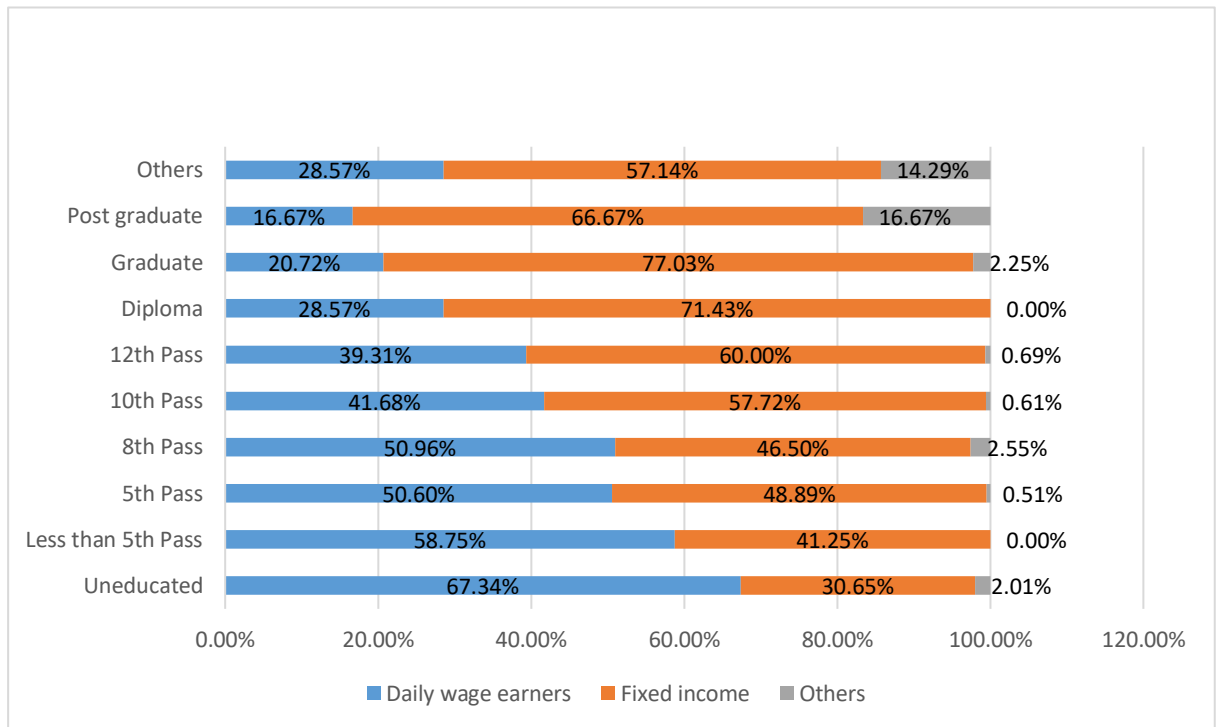


Figure 10: Employment kind and Education (2840 Responses)

- Out of the 199 uneducated respondents, around 67% (134 responses) were daily wage earners and around 31% (61 responses) had a fixed income.
- The respondents who had completed education only up to class 8th were more likely to be employed as daily wage earners as against being employed as fixed income earners. The respondents with education beyond class 8th were more likely to be employed as fixed income earners.
- The findings indicate that there exists a positive correlation between education levels and Employment kind, i.e., the probability of the respondents being employed as fixed income earners increased with the increasing levels of education.

8. Industry⁶

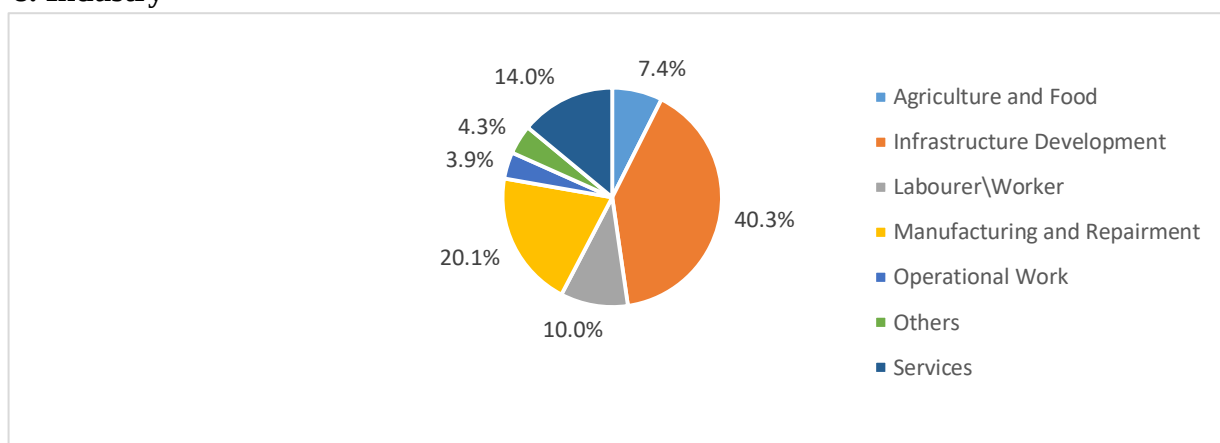


Figure 11: Industry (2752 responses)

- Out of the 2752 respondents, the highest proportion of around 40% (1109 responses) belonged to the Infrastructure Development industry, followed by the Manufacturing and Repairment industry with around 20% (553 responses) and Services industry with around 14% (385 responses). Around 10% (274 responses) were employed in the Labour/Workers industry, and a small fraction of around 4% (108 responses) undertook operational work.

8.1 Industry and Age-bracket

Industry of engagement	Age Bracket						Grand Total
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Above 64	
Agriculture and Food	52.5%	36%	9%	2%	-	0.5%	100% (200)
Infrastructure Development	37.05%	45.38%	13.45%	3.66%	0.27%	0.18%	100% (1093)
Labourer\Worker	21.57%	55.34%	17.17%	3.43%	-	-	100% (262)
Manufacturing and Repairment	42.38%	43.12%	10.46%	2.93%	0.92%	0.18%	100% (545)
Operational Work	43.27%	43.27%	10.58%	2.88%	-	-	100% (104)
Others	38.13%	43.22%	13.56%	3.39%	1.69%	-	100% (118)
Services	37.89%	41.84%	13.95%	5.79%	0.53%	-	100% (380)
Grand Total	38.42% (1038)	44.52% (1203)	12.84% (347)	3.63% (98)	0.44% (12)	0.15% (4)	100% 2702

Table 5: Industry and Age-bracket (2702 responses)

- A majority of the respondents fell in the age-bracket of 15-34 years and formed the biggest part of all industries.
- The two age-brackets forming the biggest chunk, 15-24 years and 25-34 years, were equally distributed across industries. The only exception was the Labour industry, where the number of respondents in the age-bracket of 25-34 years was significantly higher than all other age-brackets including 15-24 years.

⁶ For respondents who mentioned their individual industry of employment, a detailed list of the broader industry categories has been annexed herewith as Annexure 4.

8.2. Industry and Gender

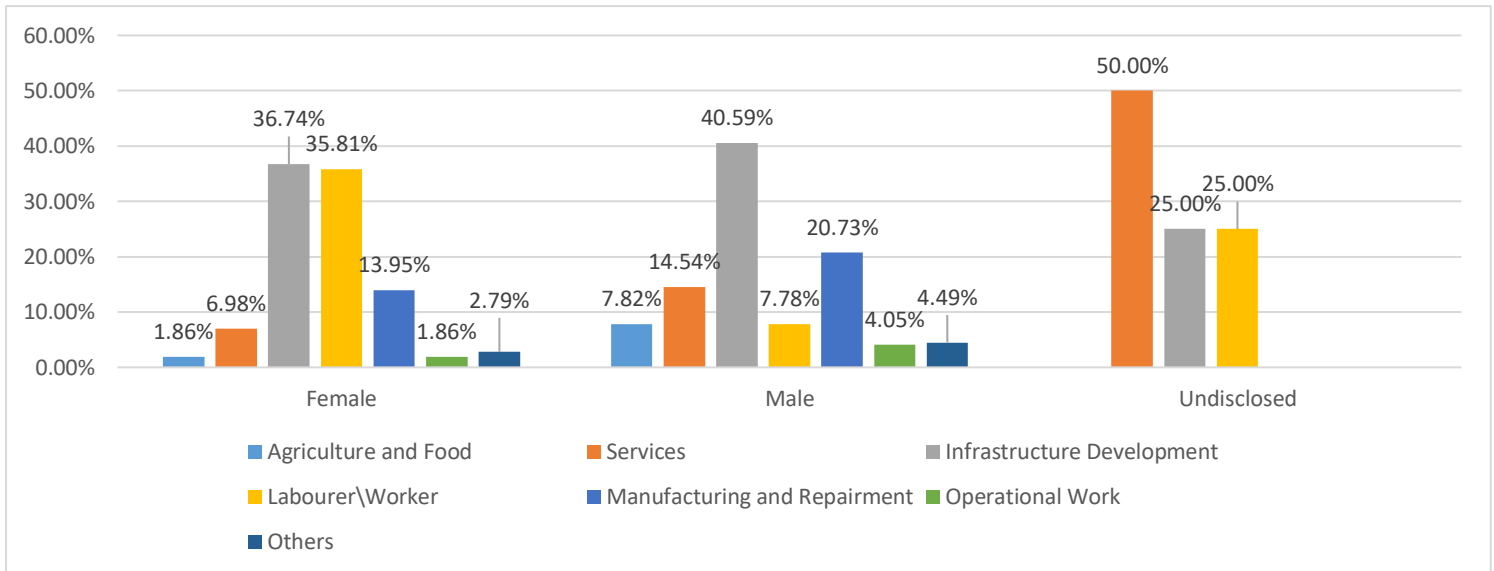


Figure 12 : Industry and Gender (2737 responses)

- Across all industries, the share of male respondents was higher than that of female respondents, except for the Labour/Worker industry.
- Out of the 215 female respondents, around 36% (77 responses) were engaged in the Labour/Worker industry. Out of the 2518 male respondents, only around 8% (196 responses) were engaged in the Labour/Worker industry.
- This analysis indicates that female respondents were more likely to be engaged in labour-intensive employment. Not only were they more likely to be engaged in labour-intensive employment, females were also more likely to be paid daily wages than fixed wages as seen in section 7.1 Kind of employment and Gender.

8.3. Industry and Category

Industry	Category						Grand Total
	General	Other Backward Classes	Schedule Caste	Schedule Tribe	Others	Did not know	
Agriculture and Food	4.98%	7.02%	8.75%	10.70%	16.22%	9.68%	7.39% (185)
Infrastructure Development	41.80%	37.47%	38.20%	37.70%	32.43%	41.94%	39.13% (979)
Labourer\Worker	9.36%	13.03%	13.26%	4.55%	2.70%	7.53%	10.23% (256)
Manufacturing and Repairment	19.81%	18.42%	19.63%	25.67%	32.43%	17.20%	20.30% (508)
Operational Work	3.89%	5.51%	1.86%	3.74%	5.41%	2.15%	4.04% (101)
Others	4.62%	5.51%	4.24%	2.67%	2.70%	4.30%	4.52% (113)
Services	15.55%	13.03%	14.06%	14.97%	8.11%	17.20%	14.39% (360)
Grand Total	823 (100%)	798 (100%)	377 (100%)	374 (100%)	37 (100%)	93 (100%)	2502 Responses

Table 6: Industry and Category (2502 responses)

- The highest proportion, around 35-40% (979 responses), were engaged in the Infrastructure Development industry.
- Respondents belonging to different categories were engaged in various industries in almost similar proportions. This indicates that access to industries was not restricted based on category.

8.4. Industry and Education

Education (Row)	Industry (Column)							Grand Total
	Agriculture and Food	Infrastructure Development	Labourer/Worker	Manufacturing and Repairment	Operational Work	Other	Services	
Uneducated	8.91%	9.81%	6.25%	4.05%	2.80%	5.93%	5.77%	7.22% (196)
Less than 5th Pass	0.50%	3.67%	5.88%	1.84%	0.00%	0.85%	3.15%	2.95% (80)
5th Pass	21.29%	24.20%	27.94%	18.42%	11.21%	17.80%	17.85%	21.52% (584)
8th Pass	9.90%	5.96%	5.15%	4.60%	6.54%	5.93%	6.04%	5.93% (161)
10th Pass	43.07%	34.65%	37.13%	37.75%	22.43%	23.73%	32.28%	34.86% (946)
12th Pass	11.88%	16.22%	12.87%	23.57%	26.17%	25.42%	21.00%	18.50% (502)
Diploma	0.99%	0.00%	0.00%	0.92%	3.74%	1.69%	0.26%	0.52% (14)
Graduate	3.47%	4.67%	4.41%	8.47%	25.23%	16.10%	13.12%	7.81% (212)
Post graduate	0.00%	0.64%	0.00%	0.18%	1.87%	0.85%	0.26%	0.44% (12)
Others	0.00%	0.18%	0.37%	0.18%	0.00%	1.69%	0.26%	0.26% (7)
Total	100% (202)	100% (1091)	100% (272)	100% (543)	100% (107)	100% (118)	100% (381)	2714 Responses

Table 7: Industry and Education (2714 responses)

- A higher proportion of respondents who had educational qualifications of at least class 12th belonged to the Operational Work, Services, and Manufacturing and Repairment industry.

8.5. Industry and Kind of employment

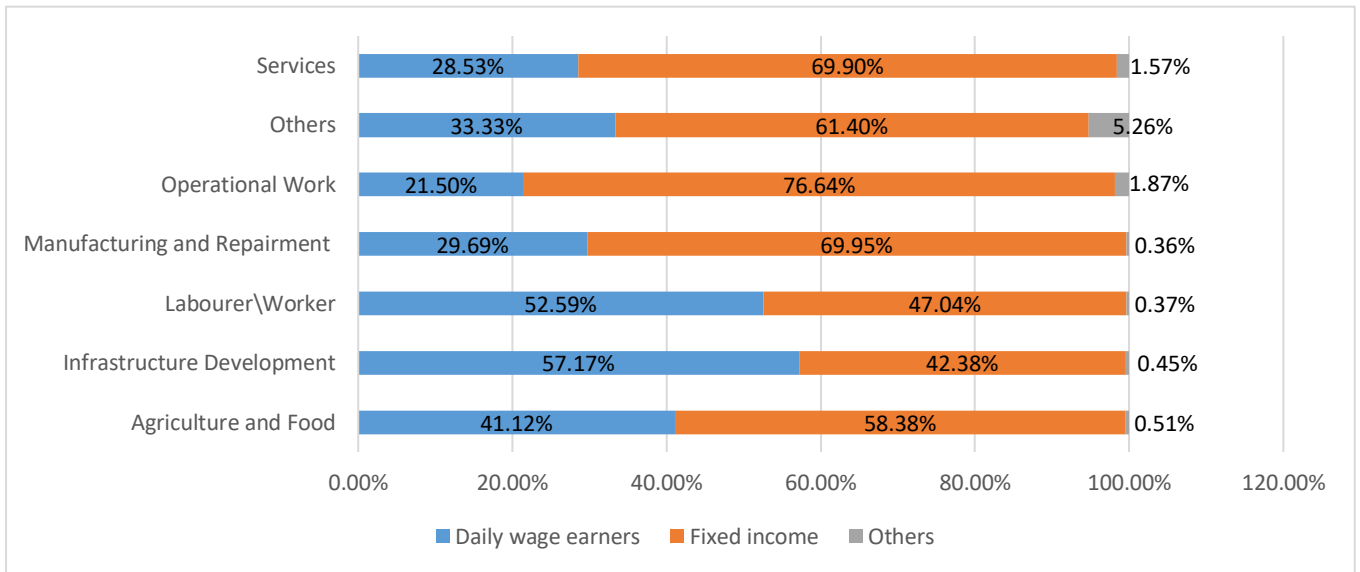


Figure 13: Industry and Kind of employment (2712 responses)

- The Infrastructure Development industry also had the highest proportion of daily wage earners followed by the Labour/Worker industry.
- The Operational Work industry had the highest proportion of fixed income earners followed by the Manufacturing and Repairment industry.
- As indicated above in section 7.3 Kind of employment and Education, there exists a positive correlation between education levels and employment kind. Higher education level increases the likelihood of getting a fixed income employment, which is the preferred type amongst the two employment kinds.
- A combined analysis of the aforementioned sections (sections 7.3, 8.3. Industry and Category) with the graph above indicates that the respondents engaged in the Infrastructure Development industry and Labour/Worker industry were more likely to have lower education levels as compared to the education level of their counterparts in other industries.

9. Income groups ⁷

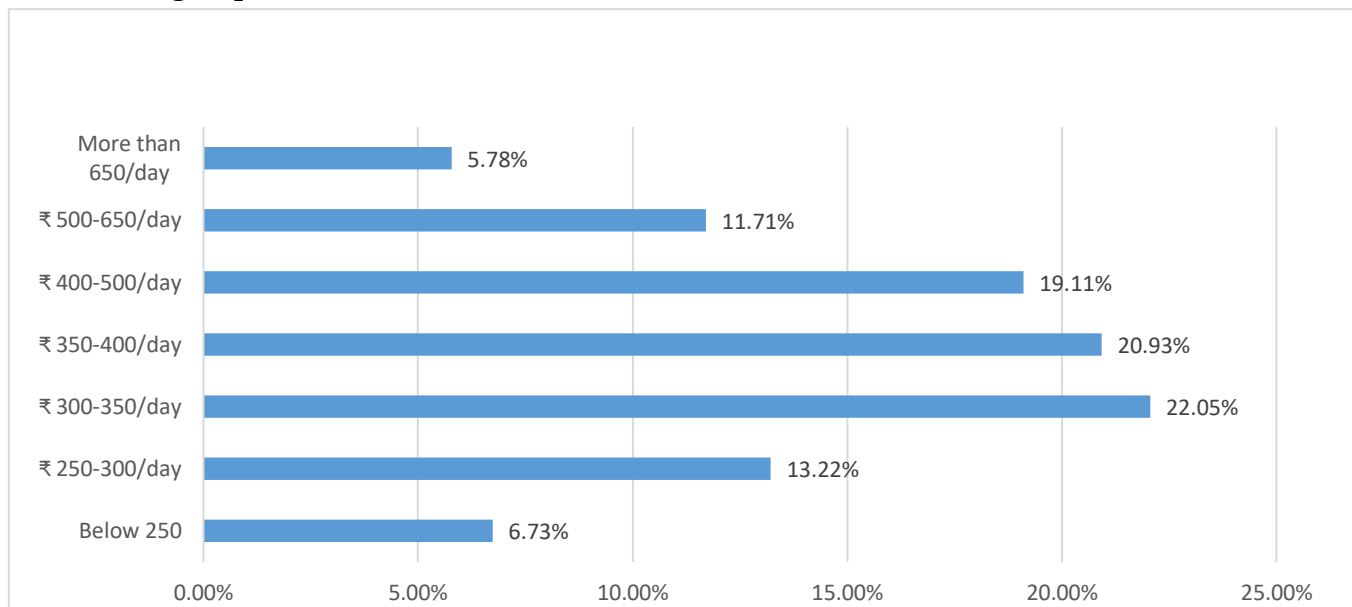


Figure 14: Income groups (2852 responses)

- Out of the 2852 respondents, around 22% (629 responses) earnt ₹ 300-350/day, around 21% (570 responses) earnt ₹350-400/day, while around 19% (545 responses) earnt ₹ 400-500/day.
- Around 7% (199 responses) earnt less than ₹ 250/day and only around 6% (1910 responses) earned more than ₹ 650/day.
- Most of the respondents, around 62% (1768 responses) earnt between ₹ 300 to 500/day.

9.1. Income group and Gender

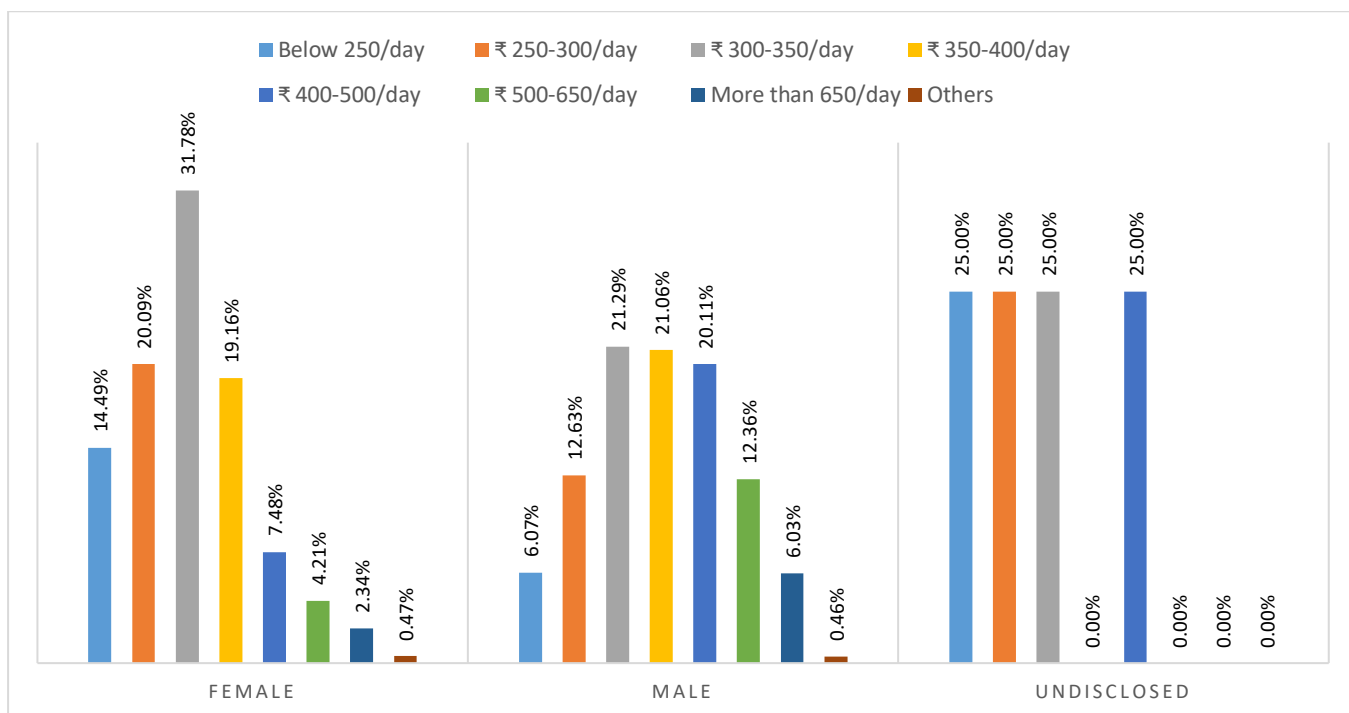


Figure 15: Income group and Gender (2839 responses)

⁷ For respondents who mentioned their income group, a detailed list of the various amounts earned under the different income groups including 'others' has been annexed herewith as Annexure 5.

- The proportion of female respondents for the below-average income groups⁸ is significantly higher (around 66%) as compared to their male counterparts (around 40%).
- With an increase in the income levels, the proportion of female respondents for the above-average income groups⁹ decreases drastically as compared to their male counterparts for those groups.
- The above findings indicate that there exists gender disparity in terms of incomes earned by males and females.
- As per section 8.2, female respondents were not only doing more labour-intensive jobs, but they were also earning lesser than the male respondents.

9.2 Income group and Category

Occupation	Category						Grand Total
	General	Other Backward Classes	Schedule Caste	Schedule Tribe	Did not know	Others	
Below 250 day	4.34%	8.03%	6.78%	6.33%	8.60%	2.70%	6.29% (163)
₹ 250-300/day	12.34%	13.10%	18.59%	12.40%	10.75%	8.11%	13.43% (348)
₹ 300-350/day	23.09%	21.14%	24.12%	20.05%	25.81%	35.14%	22.46% (582)
₹ 350-400/day	24.34%	18.79%	23.12%	19.00%	19.35%	21.62%	21.42% (555)
₹ 400-500/day	16.57%	18.54%	17.59%	22.69%	20.43%	24.32%	18.49% (479)
₹ 500-650/day	11.43%	13.47%	6.53%	12.66%	13.98%	8.11%	11.54% (299)
More than 650/day	7.43%	6.30%	3.02%	6.33%	1.08%	0.00%	5.91% (153)
Others	0.46%	0.62%	0.25%	0.53%	0.00%	0.00%	0.46% (12)
Grand Total	100% (875)	100% (809)	100% (398)	100% (379)	100% (93)	100% (37)	2591

Table 8: Income group and Category (2591 responses)

- The proportion of SC respondents was the highest in the below-average income groups while they had the lowest share in the above-average income groups.
- In the above-average income groups, the share of ST respondents far exceeded their counterparts from the other categories.

9.3 Income group and Education

Income Groups (Row)	Educational qualifications (Column)										Grand Total
	Uneducated	Less than 5th Pass	5th Pass	8th Pass	10th Pass	12th Pass	Diploma	Graduate	Postgraduate	Others	
Below 250/day	13.37%	4.28%	33.69%	6.95%	26.74%	8.56%	0.53%	5.88%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00% (187)

⁸ Please note that the below average income groups for the purposes of this report include the income bracket of less than ₹ 250/day, ₹ 250-300/day, and ₹ 300-350/day.

⁹ Please note that the above average income groups for the purposes of this report include the income bracket of ₹ 400-500/day, ₹ 500-650/day, and more than ₹ 650/day.

₹ 250-300/day	13.44%	3.49%	25.27 %	4.30%	34.68%	15.32%	0.27%	2.69%	0.27%	0.27%	100.00% (372)
₹ 300-350/day	7.69%	3.53%	21.31 %	5.29%	37.02%	20.35%	0.48%	3.85%	0.48%	0.00%	100.00% (624)
₹ 350-400/day	4.91%	2.88%	20.81 %	5.75%	40.44%	20.81%	0.17%	3.55%	0.17%	0.51%	100.00% (591)
₹ 400-500/day	4.66%	0.74%	18.25 %	5.77%	32.96%	24.77%	0.93%	11.17%	0.56%	0.19%	100.00% (537)
₹ 500-650/day	3.63%	3.02%	15.11 %	6.65%	31.42%	25.68%	0.91%	12.39%	0.91%	0.30%	100.00% (331)
More than 650/day	1.83%	3.05%	12.20 %	6.71%	31.71%	18.90%	0.00%	24.39%	1.22%	0.00%	100.00% (164)
Others	0.00%	0.00%	7.69 %	0.00%	15.38%	23.08%	0.00%	46.15%	0.00%	7.69%	100.00% (13)
Grand Total	6.81% (192)	2.80% (79)	20.65 % (582)	5.68 % (160)	34.91% (984)	20.40% (575)	0.50% (14)	7.56% (213)	0.46% (13)	0.25 % (7)	2819

Table 9: Income group and education (2819 responses)

- Around 85% (159 responses) in ‘below ₹250/day’, around 81% (302 responses) in ‘₹ 250-300/day’, around 75% in ‘₹300-350’ (467 responses) and around 61% (442 responses) in ‘₹ 350-400/day’ had educational qualifications up to 10th pass and below.
- As observed in sections 7.3 and 8.4, respondents with higher educational qualifications are not only earning relatively higher wages but also have fixed income. It is in contrast to respondents with education level of 10th and below, who earned lesser and had a higher proportion of daily wage earners.

9.4. Income group and Kind of employment

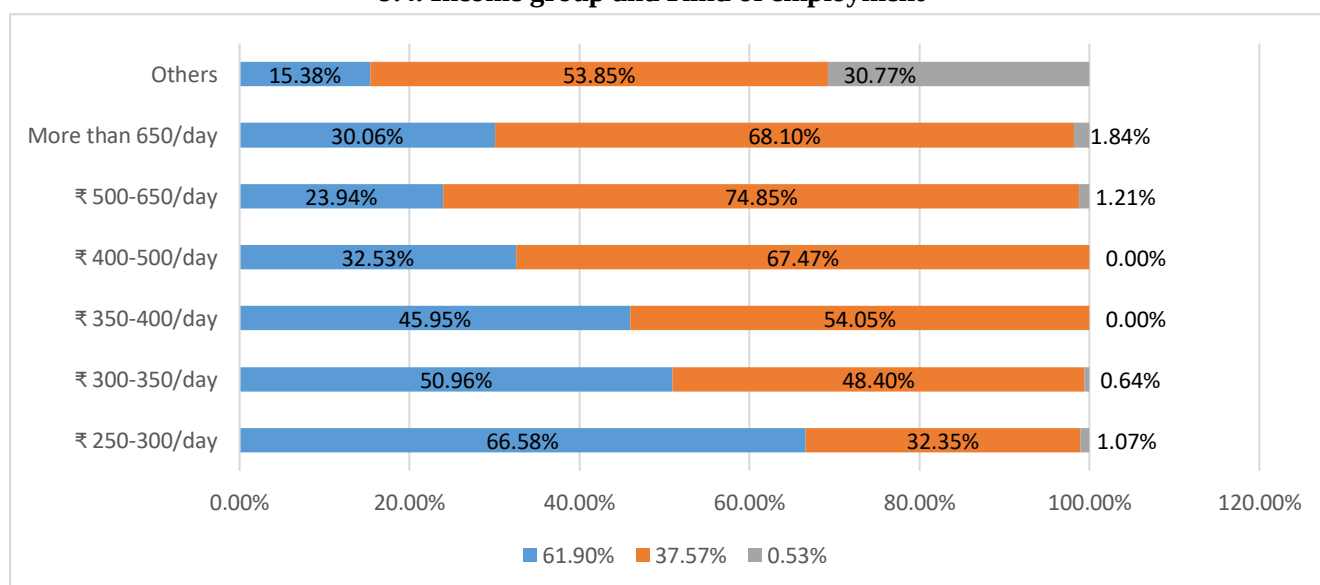


Figure 16: Income group and Kind of employment (2823 responses)

- In the average income groups and above-average income groups, there was a higher proportion of people getting a fixed income. At least half of the respondents in these income groups had fixed income jobs.
- The respondents in the income group ‘₹500-650/day’ had the highest access to fixed income jobs, around 75% (247 responses) of the respondents had a fixed income job. Whereas, respondents in the income group of ‘₹250-300/day’ had the least access to fixed income jobs, with around 32% (121 responses) of the respondents in the fixed income jobs.

9.5 Income group and Industry

Income groups	Industry							Grand Total
	Agriculture and Food	Infrastructure Development	Labourer\ Worker	Manufacturing and Repairment	Operational Work	Others	Services	
Below 250/day	11.86%	5.48%	13.24%	3.68%	7.00%	15.04%	6.67%	6.98% (188)
₹ 250-300/day	14.95%	14.08%	22.43%	9.56%	3.00%	7.08%	17.33%	13.82% (372)
₹ 300-350/day	19.59%	23.03%	29.04%	19.85%	14.00%	15.04%	16.53%	21.17% (570)
₹ 350-400/day	23.20%	22.67%	18.01%	18.38%	14.00%	11.50%	19.20%	20.10% (541)
₹ 400-500/day	21.13%	16.64%	11.03%	27.39%	18.00%	27.43%	18.40%	19.32% (520)
₹ 500-650/day	6.70%	10.69%	4.04%	15.26%	27.00%	15.93%	14.67%	12.04% (324)
More than 650/day	2.58%	7.22%	1.47%	5.88%	15.00%	5.31%	6.13%	6.09% (164)
Others	0.00%	0.18%	0.74%	0.00%	2.00%	2.65%	1.07%	0.48% (13)
Total	100.00% (194)	100.00% (1094)	100.00% (272)	100.00% (544)	100.00% (100)	100.00% (113)	100.00% (375)	100% (2692)

Table 10: Income group and Industry (2692 responses)

- Around 65% (176 responses) of the respondents in the Labourer/Worker industry earned less than average income. The second-highest share of respondents earning below-average income was in the Agriculture and Food industry with around 46% (90 responses). With around 24% (24 responses), Operational work had the least number of people earning below average income.
- As we move towards the above-average income groups, the proportion of respondents employed decreases for all the industries except the Operational Work industry.

10. Employment scheme coverage in host state

- Out of 2860 respondents, around 1% (31 responses) were covered by employment schemes.
- Some of the schemes which were mentioned by beneficiary migrants were MGNREGA, Skill India, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Skill India while some beneficiary respondents were not aware of the scheme they were availing.

10.1 Employment scheme coverage, Gender, and Category

- Out of the 31 responses, around 93.5% (29 responses) were male beneficiaries while only around 3% (1 response) were female beneficiaries. One respondent preferred not to disclose their gender.
- Out of the 31 responses, around 32% (10 responses) belonged to the General category, around 16% (5 responses) belonged to the OBC category, around 10% (3 responses) belonged to the SC category and around 29% (9 responses) belonged to the ST category.

10.2 Employment scheme coverage and Education

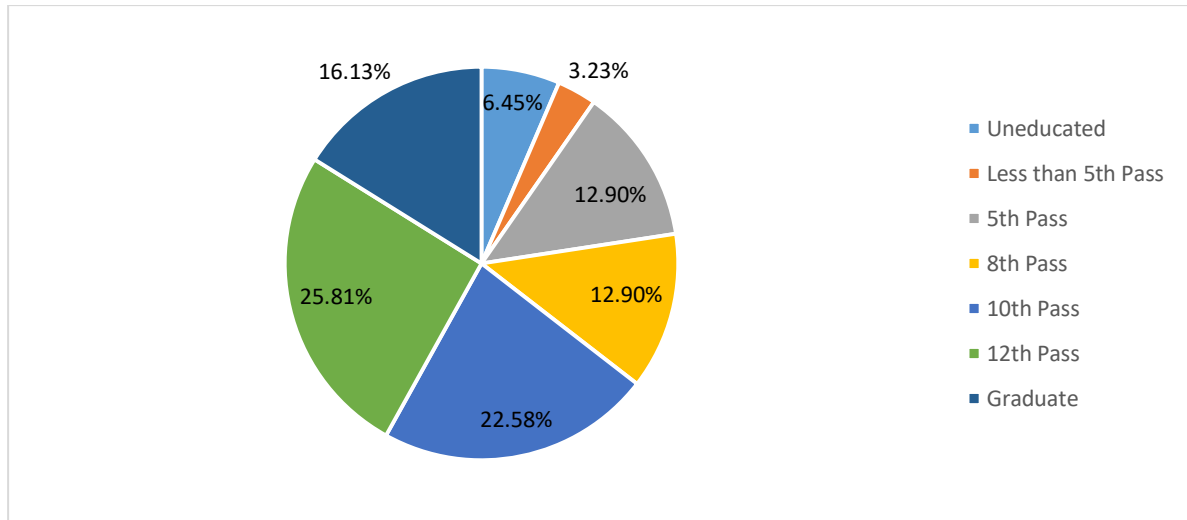


Figure 17: Employment scheme coverage and Education (31 responses)

- Around 42% (13 responses) of the beneficiaries of the employment scheme were at least 12th pass and above.

10.3 Employment scheme coverage and Income groups

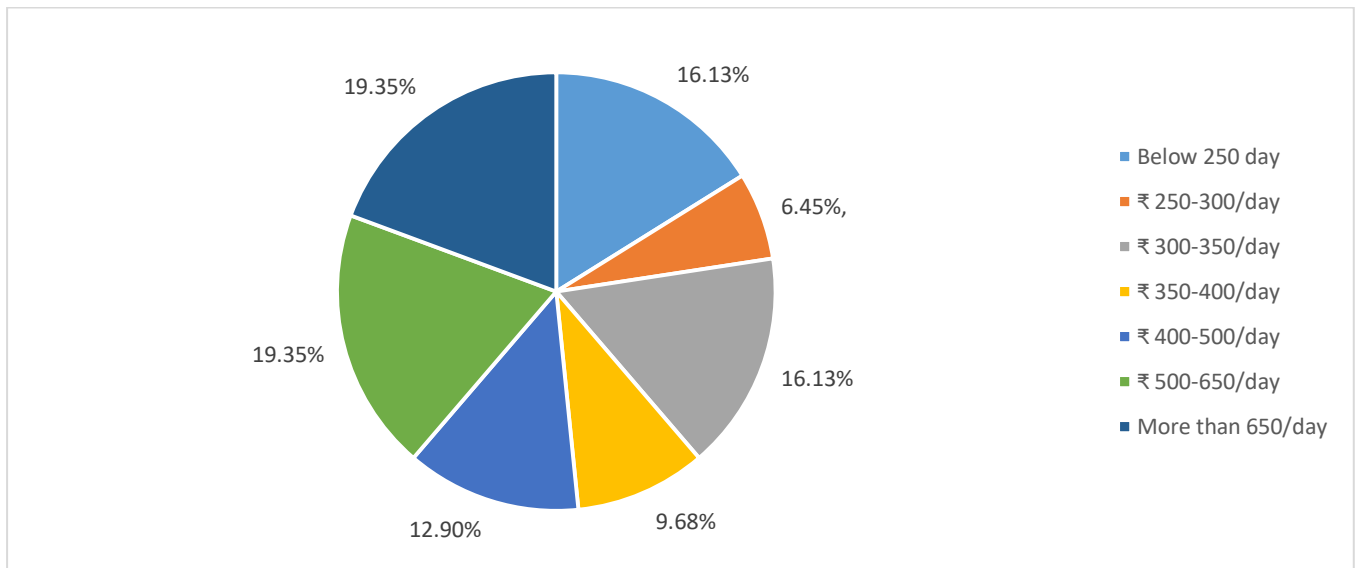


Figure 18: Employment scheme coverage and Income group (31 responses)

- Around 39% (12 responses) beneficiaries belonged to the below-average income group, while around 61% (19 responses) belonged to the average and above-average income group.
- This suggests that coverage under an employment scheme often gives access to jobs with a higher income.

11. Lockdown facilities provided in host state

Facility	Number of respondents
Monetary Support	6.92% (198)
Food	33.88% (969)
Shelter	8.14% (233)
Employment security	1.11% (32)
None of the above	50.24% (1437)

Table 11: Facilities provided in host state during lockdown (2860 responses)

- Out of 2860 respondents who answered this question, around 50 % (1437 responses) were not provided with any of the basic facilities.
- While around 33.88% (969 responses) respondents were provided with food by the host state during the lockdown, the figure is even more appalling when it comes to respondents who were given monetary support which was only around 6.92% (198 responses).

12. Lockdown facilities providers

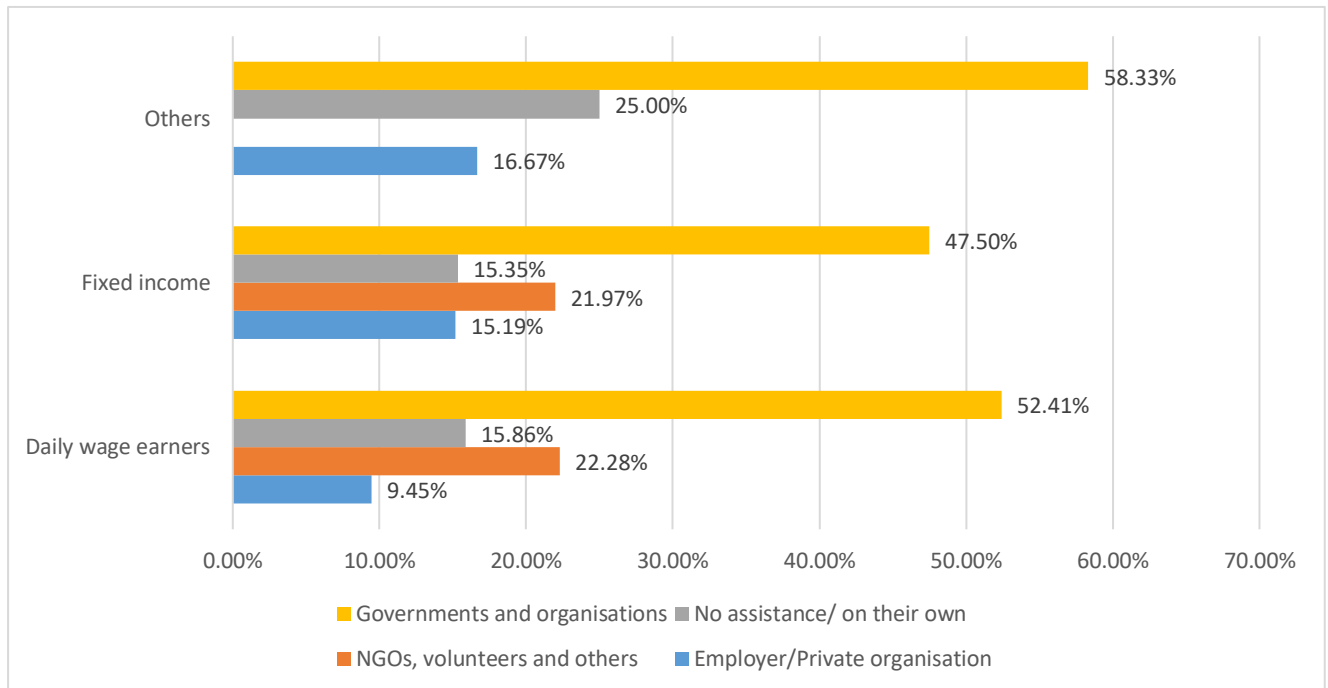


Figure 19: Lockdown facility providers (1192 responses)

- Most of the respondents received support from the government, followed by NGOs and volunteers. Respondents earning daily wages had marginally more help from government and organizations than respondents with fixed income

III. TRANSPORT, QUARANTINE & REGISTRATION

13. Online travelling registration

- Out of 2899 respondents who answered this question, around 70% (2023 responses) had registered themselves through the online registration process which largely shows that online registration was accessible to most of the respondents.

13.1 Online registration and Gender

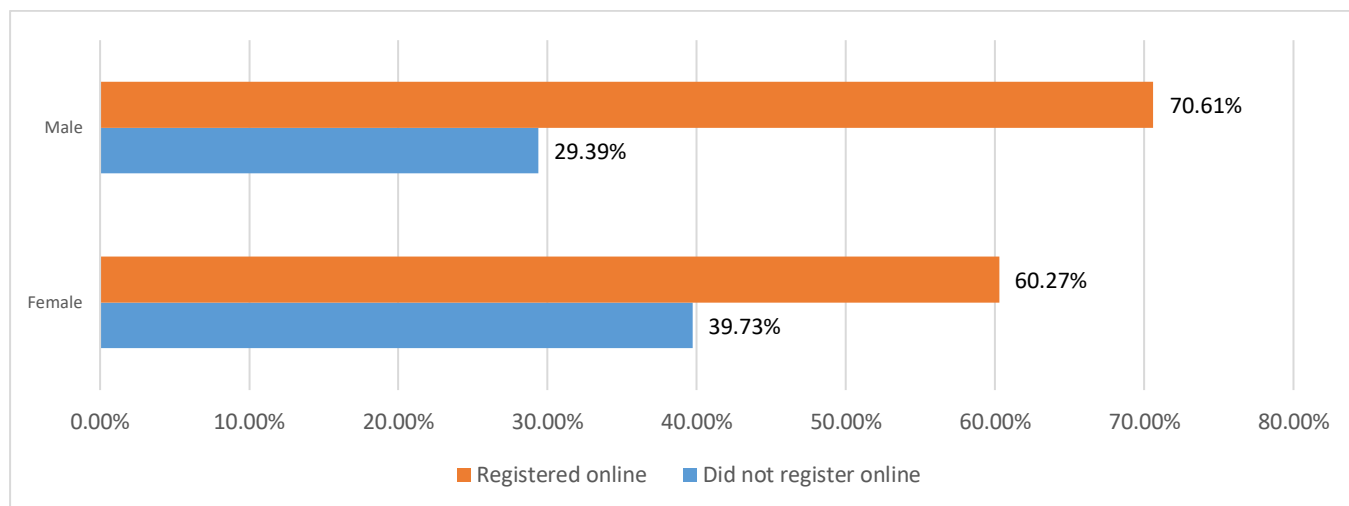


Figure 20: Online registration and Gender (2885 responses)

- Around 70% (1876 responses) of male respondents and around 60% (135 responses) of female respondents had registered themselves online.
- Out of 4 respondents who didn't disclose their gender, only one respondent registered through the online platform.

13.2 Online registration and Education

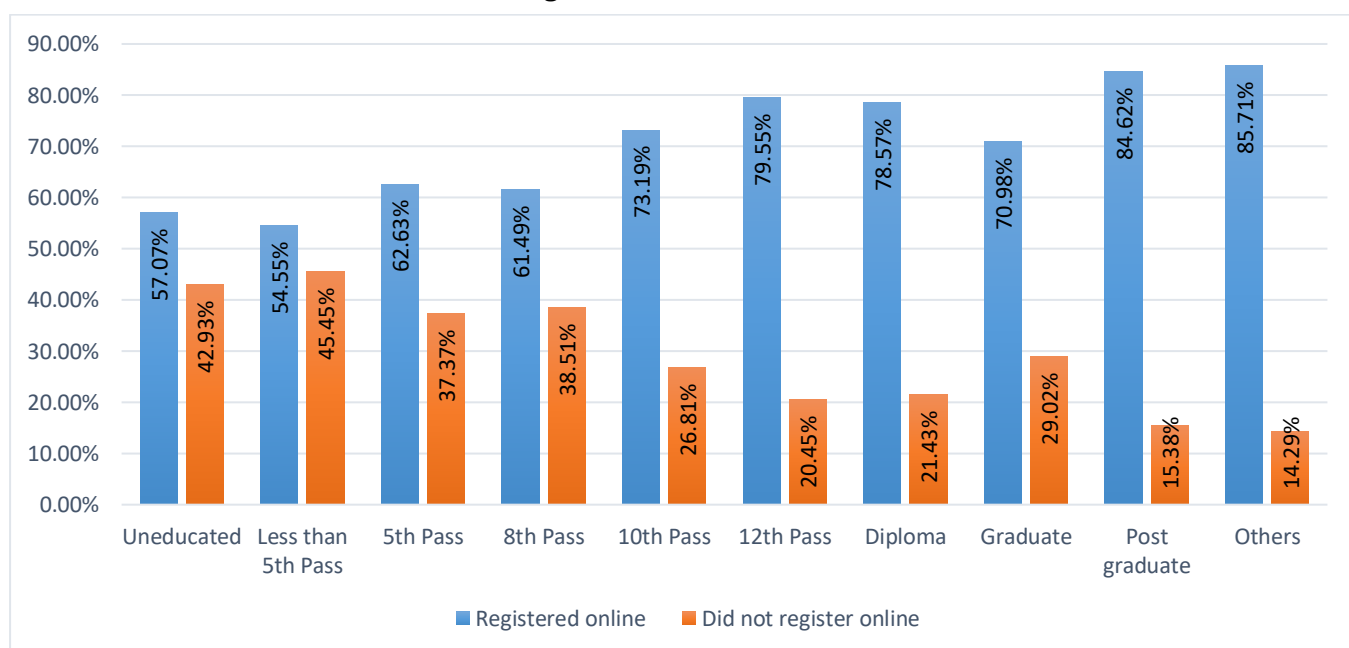


Figure 21: Online registration and Education (2853 responses)

- Respondents who were 8th pass and below had lower access to the online registration process as compared to respondents who were at least 10th pass. This indicates that there is a correlation between educational qualifications and respondents' ability to participate in the online registration process.

- As observed in section 9.3 Income group and Education, there was a positive correlation between educational qualifications and income groups. It could be the case that since the respondents with higher educational qualifications had access to higher-income groups, as a result, it increased their accessibility to the means which aided them to register online such as smartphones/cybercafes.

14. Online registration and assistance provided

- Out of 1940 respondents who answered this question, around 59.12% (1147 responses) received online assistance from government and civil societies, around 30.05% (583 responses) did not get any online assistance from government and civil societies and were able to do it on their own. Around 3.45% (67 responses) took help from family members/neighbours/employer/co-worker and around 7.37% (143 responses) took the help of other fellow- mates.
- Although around 50% of respondents had cleared 10th, 12th, and graduate-level studies, the study may indicate that despite educational levels higher reliance was placed on these competent bodies.

15. Availability of smartphone devices

- Out of 2520 respondents who answered this question, around 49.52% (1248 responses) respondents possessed smartphones for online registration, 50.48 % (1272 responses) respondents did not have smartphones for online registration.

15.1 Availability of smartphone devices and Gender

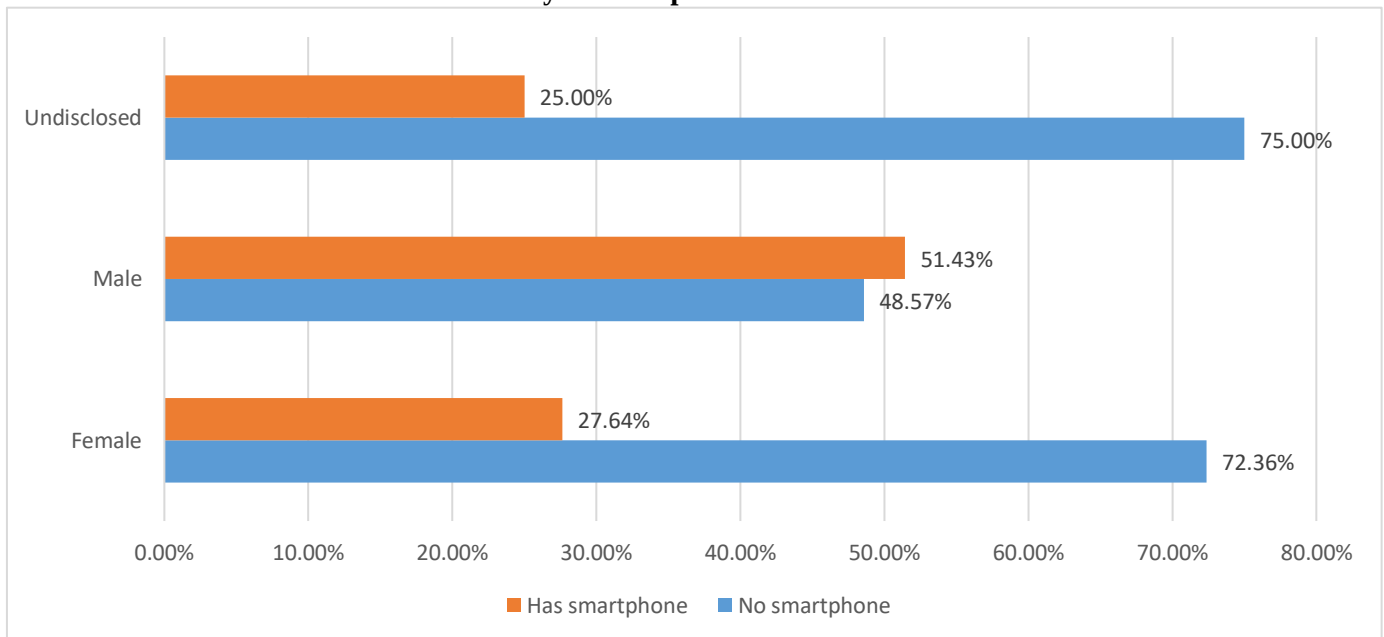


Figure 22: Smartphone availability and Gender (2507 responses)

- Smartphone was an essential factor for the online registration process. Since only half of the male respondents and one-fourth of female respondents had smartphones, the prevalent non-ownership of smartphones could have acted as a barrier for online registration for respondents.
- Less female respondents had access to smartphones than male respondents. This inaccessibility may indicate their dependency on the male members of their family for accessing smartphone devices.

16. Offline travelling registration

- When respondents who did not have access to smartphones were asked if they received assistance from officials for physical registration. 67.60 % (774 responses) respondents answered that they got assistance, but 32.40 % (371 responses) respondents mentioned no assistance.

17. Mode of travelling- Train

- Around 50.1% (1352 responses) of the respondents travelled as per the scheduled train while the other half (1344 responses) did not travel as per the scheduled train. This indicates that before the trains were made available to some respondents, they opted for an alternate travelling mode.

17.1. Online registrations and train travel

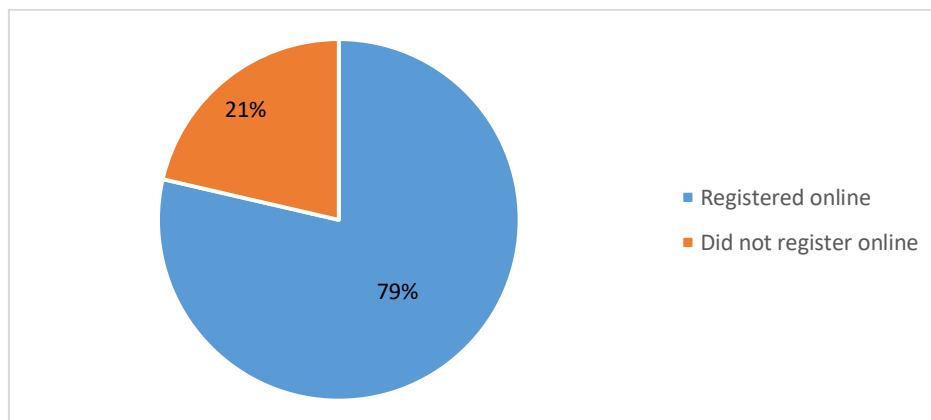


Figure 23: Online registrations and train travel (1342 responses)

- Of all the respondents who registered online for travelling by train, only 79% (1055 responses) actually undertook such travel. The remaining 21% (287 responses) did not get a chance to travel by train despite registering online. The reason behind inability to travel included delayed scheduling of train, lack of travel support from their location to nearest railway station missing names of respondents or their family members from the final train travellers list.
- The government of M.P. made tremendous effort in scheduling trains at various stations. Migrant workers were able to register for these scheduled trains through the online registration portal. However, it is also pertinent to note that, most trains were scheduled at major stations and did not cover minor stations through the course of the journey.

17.2. Offline registrations and train travel

- Out of 911 respondents, around 58.84% (536 responses) who were physically assisted, travelled as per the scheduled train. Around 38.75% (353 responses) of respondents who were physically assisted, did not travel as per the scheduled train. And, around 2.41% (22 respondents) respondents did not respond to the question.

18. Duration of train journey¹⁰

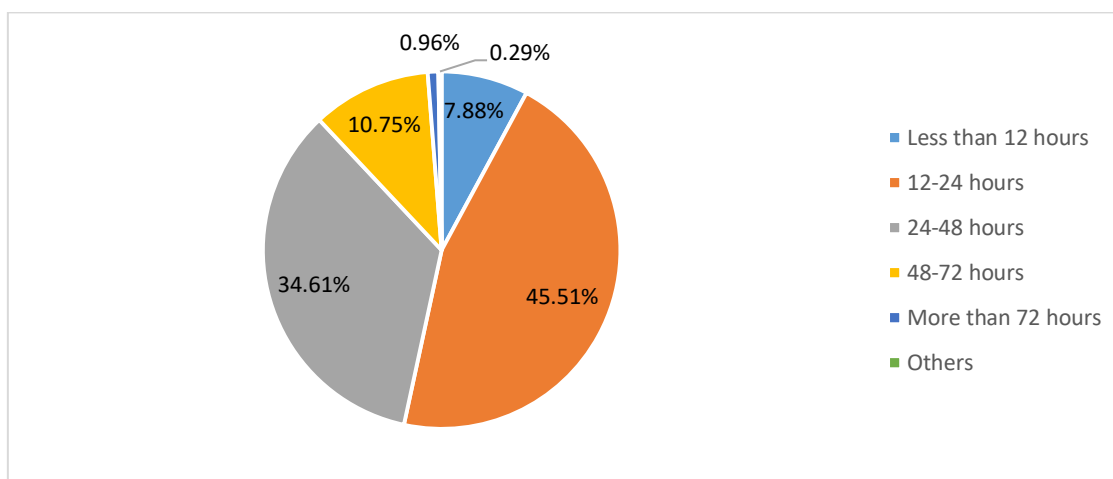


Figure 24: Duration of train journey (1359 Responses)

¹⁰ For respondents who mentioned their duration of travel time, a list of the various responses under the category of 'others' has been annexed herewith as Annexure 6.

- More than 50% (725 responses) of the respondents travelled from Maharashtra to M.P. under 24 hours. Around 12% (159 responses) of the respondents spent more than 48 hours travelling by train.
- Around 25.53% (36 responses) of the respondents who travelled in 01648 Shramik Special Train (Sindhudurg to Rewa - 21.05.2020) stated that the duration travel of was between 48-72 hours. It should have been covered within 30 hours as per the official duration of time.¹¹
- Similarly, around 29.46% (33 responses) who travelled in 01737 Shramik Special Train (Solapur to Gwalior Dep - 17.05.2020) stated that the duration of travel was between 48-72 hours. It should have been covered within 20-26 hours as per the official duration of time of trains running with a similar distance.

19. Food availability on trains

- Out of a total of 995 respondents who travelled via train and responded to this question, around 77.58% (772 responses) of the respondents stated that food was made available during the journey and around 22.41% (223 responses) of the respondents stated that food was not made available during the journey.

19.1. Food quality on trains

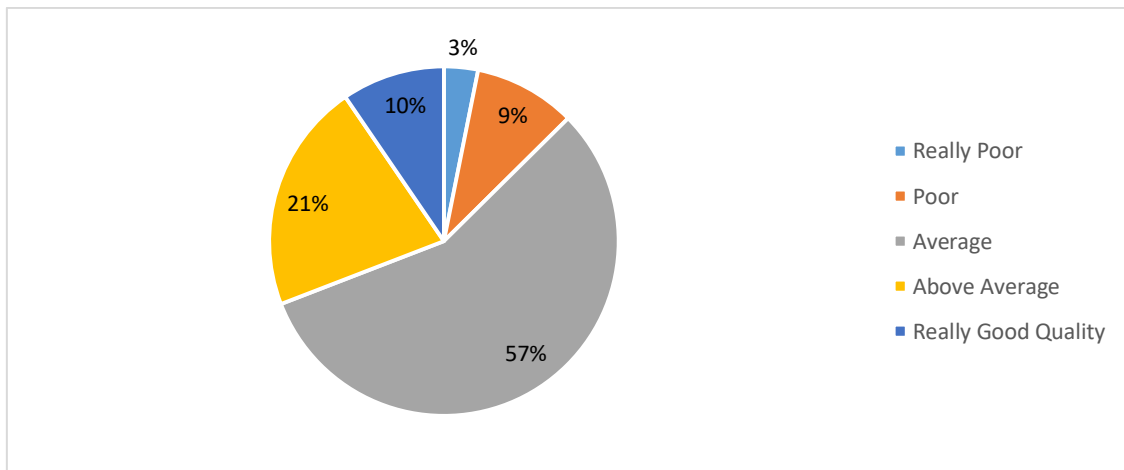


Figure 25: Food quality on trains (985 responses)

- Around 87% (861 responses) of the respondents found the quality of food between average and good. Around 13% (124 responses) of the respondents found the food quality to be poor and below poor.
- It indicates that the quality of food provided to a majority of migrant workers overall did not cause many inconveniences.

¹¹ Shivmangal Singh, *Shramik Special Train Got 33 Hours Late from Sindhu Durg*, Patrika (23/05/2020), available at <https://www.patrika.com/jabalpur-news/shramik-special-train-got-33-hour-late-from-sindhu-durg-6129105/>, last seen on 07/05/2021.

20. Alternate mode of traveling

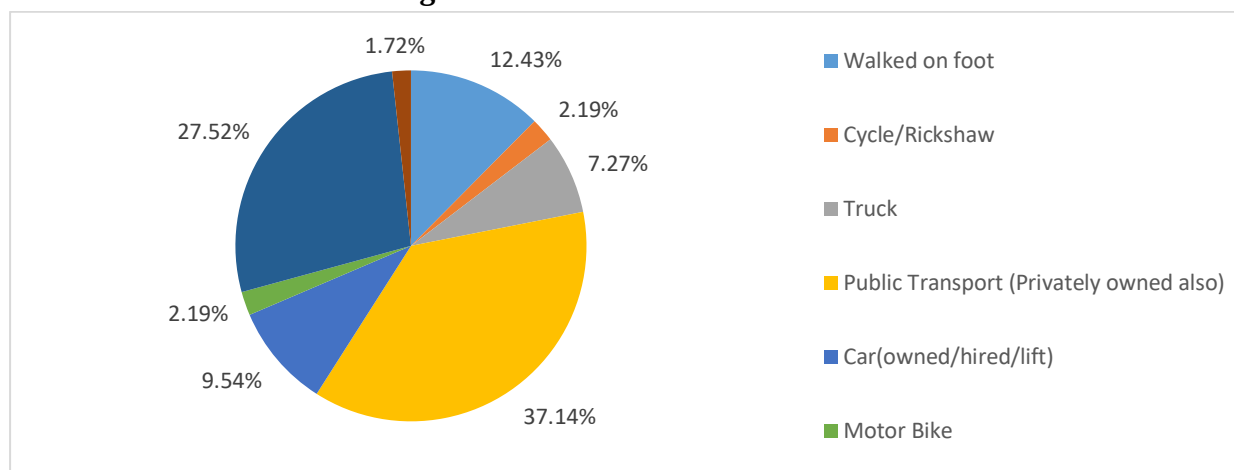


Figure 26: Alternate modes of traveling (1279 responses)

- Around 12.5% (159 responses) of the respondents who answered this question admitted that they were forced to walk back to their villages in the absence of any viable alternative to state-sponsored trains.

21. Ticket funding¹²

- Out of 2313 respondents who answered this question, around 57% (1318 responses) of the respondents stated that their travel tickets were funded entirely by the government. Around 37% (860 responses) of the respondents revealed that they had to make all travel arrangements on their own, including the purchase of tickets. Furthermore, around 5% (43 responses out of a total of 860) of such respondents also admitted that they had to buy tickets from private agents at inflated prices since that was the only option left. And some of the respondents got tickets from NGOs, employers, companies and other sources (34 responses) or received partly funded tickets (101 responses).

21.1 Ticket funding and Income group

Income group	Ticket Funding							Grand Total
	Bought by the NGO	Bought the ticket from agent at inflated prices	Bought the ticket on their own	Entirely funded by the government	Funded by the Employer/Company	Others	Partly Funded	
Below 250/day	0.67%	2.68%	36.91%	56.38%	0.67%	0.00%	2.68%	100.00% (149)
₹ 250-300/day	0.63%	0.94%	27.59%	65.52%	0.94%	0.31%	4.08%	100.00% (319)
₹ 300-350/day	0.80%	1.21%	37.22%	56.94%	0.40%	0.00%	3.42%	100.00% (497)
₹ 350-400/day	0.42%	2.11%	28.27%	61.39%	0.21%	0.00%	7.59%	100.00% (474)
₹ 400-500/day	0.23%	2.30%	38.85%	52.41%	1.38%	0.23%	4.60%	100.00% (435)
₹ 500-650/day	0.00%	2.68%	43.30%	50.19%	1.15%	0.00%	2.68%	100.00% (261)
More than ₹ 650/day	0.81%	1.61%	45.16%	49.19%	0.81%	0.00%	2.42%	100.00% (124)
Others	0.00%	0.00%	40.00%	60.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00% (10)
Total	0.48% (11)	1.85% (42)	35.43% (804)	56.99% (1293)	0.75% (17)	0.09% (2)	4.41% (100)	100% (2269)

Table 12: Ticket funding and Income group (2269 responses)

¹² For respondents who mentioned their ticket funding details, a list of the various responses under the broader industry categories has been annexed herewith as Annexure 7.

- The government appears to be the biggest contributor to ticket funding across all income groups.
- A partially higher proportion of respondents in income groups above ₹ 500/day bought the ticket on their own.

21.2 Ticket funding and online registration

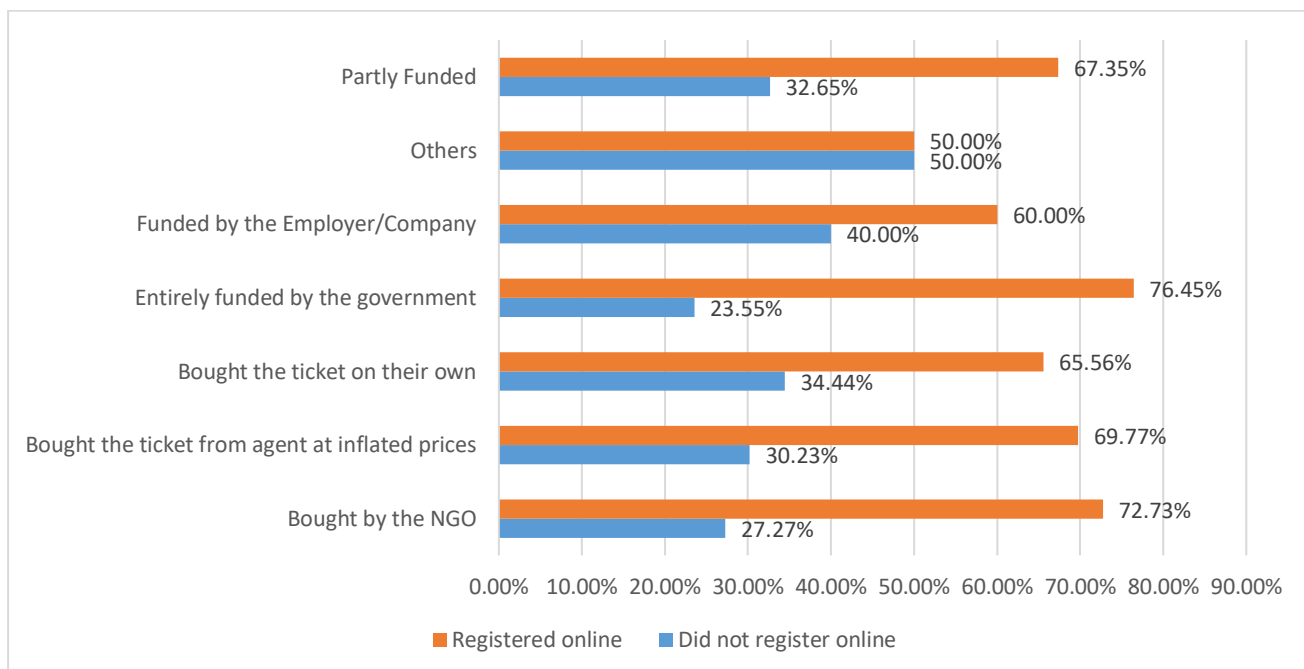


Figure 27: Ticket funding and online registration (2292 responses)

- Around 66% (561 responses) of the respondents who paid for their tickets and bought from agents had registered themselves online for transportation.
- Around 76.45% (1000 responses) of the respondents whose tickets were entirely funded by the government had also registered themselves online for transportation.

21.3 Ticket funding and assistance

Train Ticket cost bearer	Assistance				Grand Total
	Family/Friends/Employer/Co-worker	Governments/Civil Society	On their own/No assistance	Others	
Bought by the NGO	-	62.50%	37.50%	0	100% (8)
Bought the ticket from agent at inflated prices	3.57%	21.43%	42.86%	32.14%	100% (28)
Bought the ticket on their own	5.80%	34.58%	50.10%	9.52%	100% (483)
Entirely funded by the government	2.56%	75.08%	17.15%	5.22%	100% (939)
Funded by the Employer/Company	63.64%	18.18%	18.18%	-	100% (11)
Others	-	100%	-	-	100% (1)
Partly Funded	3.08%	76.92%	13.85%	6.15%	100% (65)
Grand Total	4.04% (62)	60.97% (936)	27.95% (429)	7.04% (108)	100% (1535)

Table 13: Ticket funding and assistance (1535 responses)

- Around 60% (936 responses) of the respondents received assistance from government and civil societies for online registration.
- Around 75% (705 responses) of the respondents who received government assistance for online registration (939 responses) said that their tickets were entirely funded by the government.

- The non-availability of similar support for the remaining 25% is a matter of concern. The fact that not everyone who registered through government help received financial support in terms of their travel points towards procedural lapses in the process.

22. Mode of traveling: Railway station to village¹³

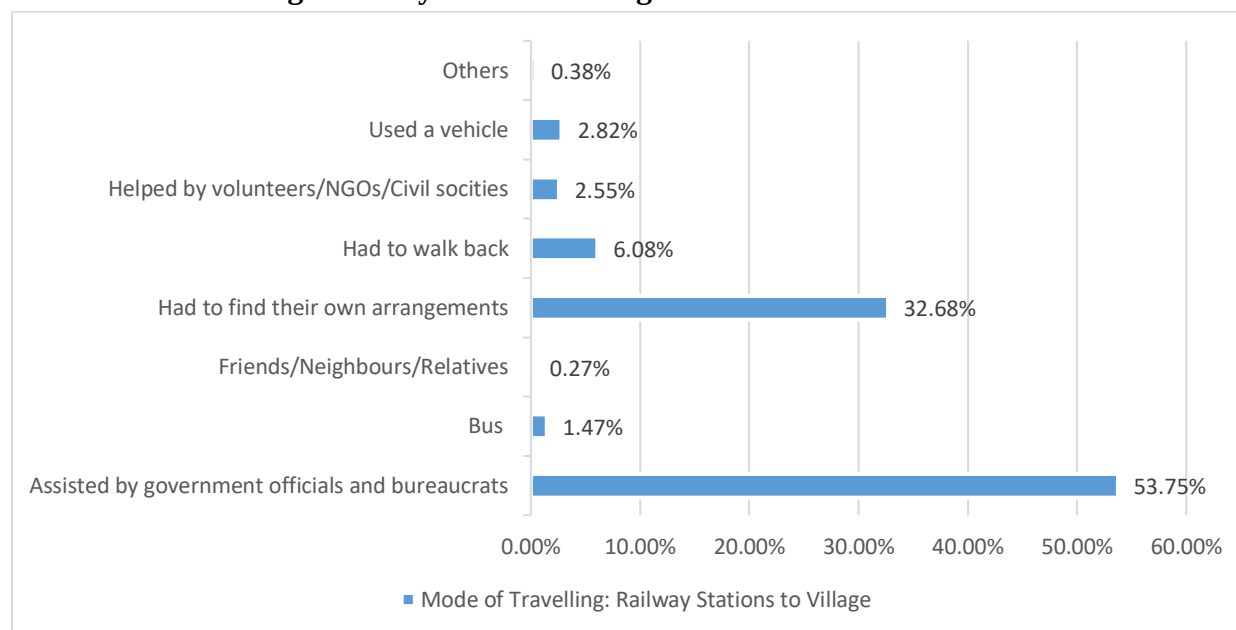


Figure 28: Mode of travelling: Railway stations to village (1842 Responses)

- Most of the migrant workers belong to remote areas and villages lacking railway stations and train connectivity. Mindful of this fact, we inquired from the returning workers about the travel facilities made available to them beyond the scheduled trains.

Around 53.7% (990 responses) of the respondents who answered this question said that they were provided with constant government or bureaucratic assistance till the time they reached their villages. For remote areas not connected through the railway network, assistance was provided in the form of state-sponsored buses.

23. Quarantine

Once these respondents reached their hometown/village, we inquired regarding the mandatory quarantine processes by M.P. government for a minimum number of 14 days to contain the potential spread of the virus.¹⁴

- Out of 2788 respondents who answered this question, around 66% (1840 responses) respondents answered positively that they were quarantined.

23.1. State of quarantine centers

Out of 1564 respondents who answered the question on the state of quarantine centers:

- Caste and Gender remarks: Less than 1% (12 responses) said that they were subjected to caste (10 respondents belonging to OBC, SC, ST category) and gender-based (3 female respondents) comments at their respective quarantine facility.
- Unhygienic: Around 27% (421 responses) of the respondents said that the quarantine centers were unhygienic with poor sanitation and washroom facilities. Out of these respondents, around 7.6% were female respondents while an overwhelming majority, 92.4% were male respondents.

¹³ For respondents who mentioned mode of travel from the railway station to their villages, a detailed list of the various responses under the broader industry categories has been annexed herewith as Annexure 8.

¹⁴PTI, Rs 2000 fine for home quarantine violation in MP, Economic Times (28/05/2020), available at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/rs-2000-fine-for-home-quarantine-violation-in-mp/articleshow/76059869.cms>, last seen on 07/05/2021.

- Food availability: Around 35% (540 responses) of the respondents also said that food was either not available, and if available, was not provided on time at their quarantine centre.
- Doctor's support: Around 30% (388 responses) of the respondents stated that no doctors or other medical practitioners visited the quarantine facilities during their stay there.

SUPREME COURT MANDATES

The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India vide its order dated June 9th, 2020 mandated all states to maintain records of all incoming migrant workers.¹⁵ Resultantly, states were required to document crucial details of the returning migrant workers such as their names, address, nature of their skill, place of their earlier employment. This was proposed to be done so that necessary help could be easily extended by the state and district authorities to the identified workers. In the next few sections, we highlight if MP Government followed these details of respondents.

24. Registration undertaken in home state¹⁶

- Out of 2763 respondents who answered this question, around 64% (1773 responses) of the respondents said that they were subjected to some kind of registration procedure as they returned to their hometowns. Around 29% (796 responses) of the respondents said that the government/relevant authorities did not ask for any details on their arrival. The remaining 7% (194 responses) of the respondents said that they did not remember if they were asked for any information in this regard.

24.1 Registration details

Details enquired	Total Responses
Only the basic details (such as Name, Age, Gender, place of work, Village, etc.)	62.33% (1722)
Nature of their skill (skilled or unskilled labour)	16.58% (458)
Place of their earlier employment	22.77% (629)
Daily Wage earners	9.74% (269)
Didn't answer	33.44% (924)

Table 14: Registration details (2743 responses)

- Around 62% (1722 responses) of the respondents who answered this question said that the recording authorities inquired only about basic details such as their name, age, and gender. Only around 17% (458 responses) of the respondents were additionally questioned by the authorities in relation to the nature of skill that they possessed to classify them as either skilled or unskilled labour.
- Around 10% (269 responses) of the respondents said that they were also questioned about the daily wages that they earned during the pre-Covid period.
- Maintaining a record of information such as the nature of skill possessed and the wages earned was important from a post-pandemic (and during pandemic) job provision/security angle. Such detailed information should have been recorded by state authorities for all returning workers. This would have simplified the process of finding suitable jobs for the incoming respondents based on their expertise and skills.

¹⁵ In Re Problems and Miseries of Migrant Labourers, 2020 SCCOnline SC 492

¹⁶ For respondents who responded whether registration was undertaken in the home state, a list of the various responses under the different categories of 'yes', 'no' and 'others' has been annexed herewith as Annexure 9.

24.2. Mode of registration

- Out of 1773 respondents who mentioned that the registration procedure was done when they returned to their hometowns, 87.87 % (1558 Responses) mentioned that the process was online, and 7.45% (132 Responses) marked the process offline. The rest of the respondents didn't answer this question.

25. Access to information regarding employment opportunities provided by the state

- In furtherance of the Supreme Courts directive, we inquired from the returned workers if they were contacted by any government representatives in relation to employment opportunities after they reached their hometowns.
- Out of a total of 2796 of the respondents who answered this question, around 87% (2420 responses) said that they were never contacted by any state authority or government representative or any other body in relation to any possible employment opportunities.

25.1 Employment opportunities and Gender

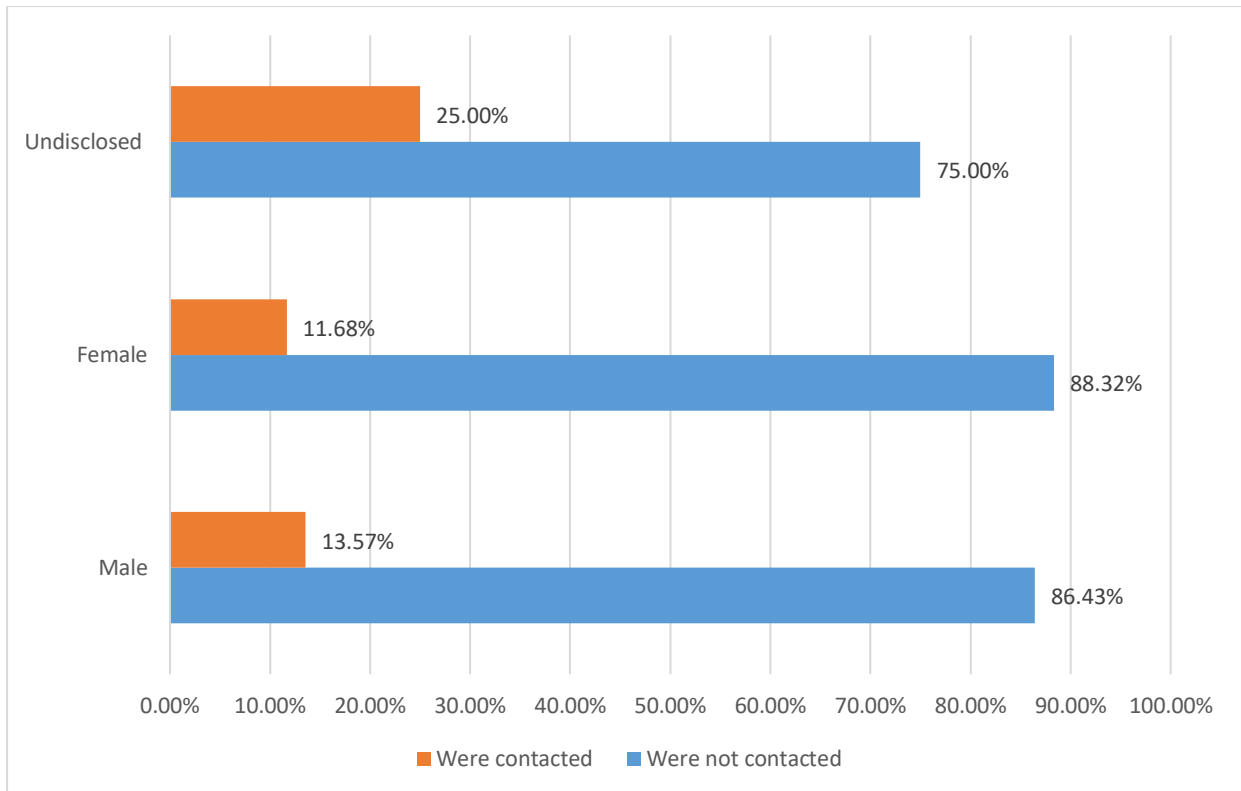


Figure 29: Employment opportunities and Gender (2782 responses)

- Around 14% (348 responses) of the male respondents and around 12% (25 responses) of the female respondents were contacted by government representatives in relation to employment opportunities for their arrival while 1 respondent not belonging to either gender was also contacted.

26. Employment opportunities and Category

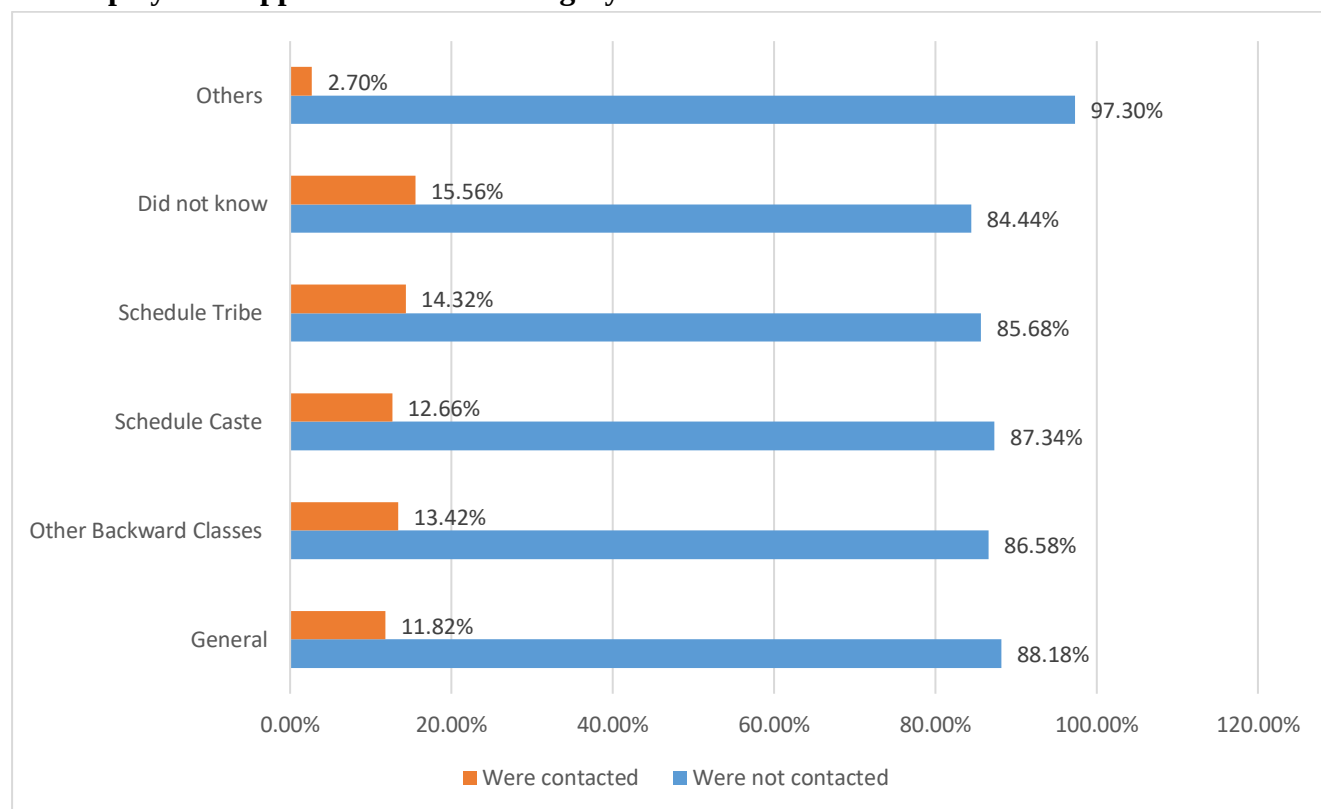


Figure 30: Employment opportunities and Category (2552 responses)

- Respondents belonging to OBC, SC, ST categories were contacted marginally more than the respondents belonging to the General category by the government for opportunities.

26.1 Employment opportunities and Industry

- Most respondents who were contacted by the government officials for employment opportunities were from Manufacturing and Repairment Industry (17.49%), followed by Infrastructure Development (14.07%), Labourer/Worker (13.16%), Agriculture and Food (12.76%), Services (11.56%), Operational Work (11.54%) and Others (10.34%).

27. Usefulness of governmental representatives' support

- Out of 782 respondents who answered this question, 95% (743 responses) of the respondents stated that the government representations did not help them find or secure jobs, and around 5% (39 responses) of the respondents who answered this question felt that the information shared with them during the process was useful.

IV. POST PANDEMIC DETAILS

This part records the responses regarding the status of respondents in December 2020 after they had come back to the home state and the nationwide lockdown had been relaxed.

28. Current location¹⁷

- Out of 2917 respondents who answered this question, 74.87% (2184 responses) are still located at home state, while around 24.51% (733 responses) are now back to host state or a new state altogether.

28.1 Current location and Category

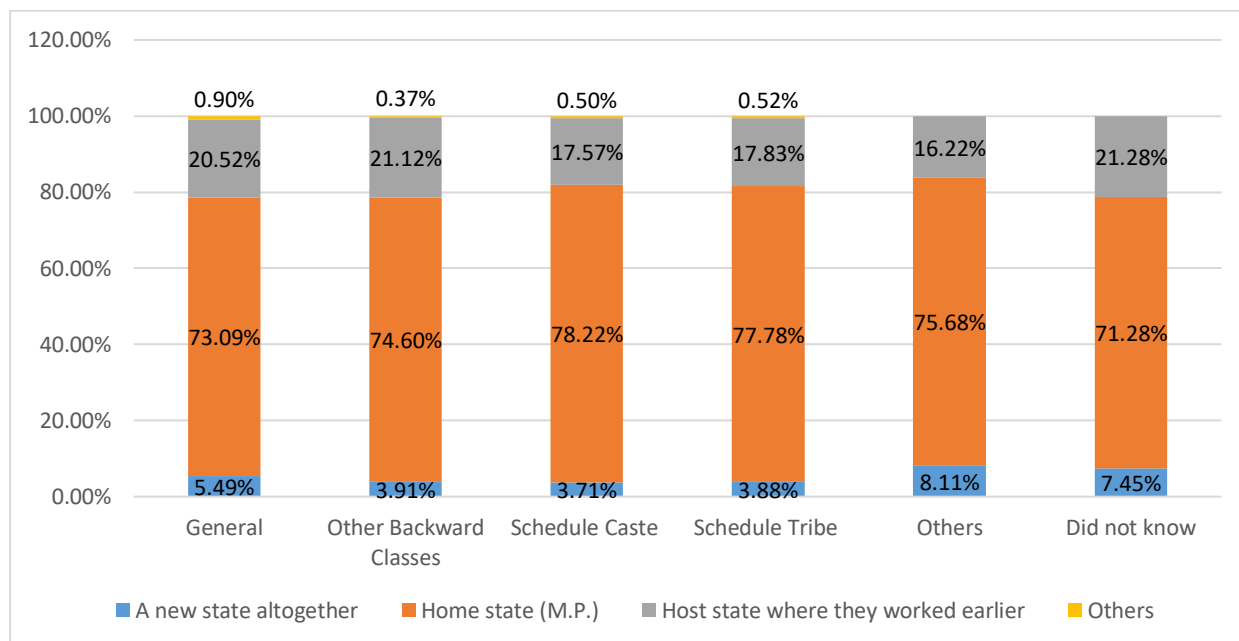


Figure 31: Current location and Category (2633 responses)

- SC respondents had the highest proportion, with around 78% (316 responses), who were staying in M.P.
- A relatively higher percentage of General and OBC respondents relocated to their host state. At the time of the survey, public transportation services had not yet started.

¹⁷ For respondents who mentioned their current location, a list of the various responses under the broader categories has been annexed herewith as Annexure 10.

28.2 Current location and Age-bracket

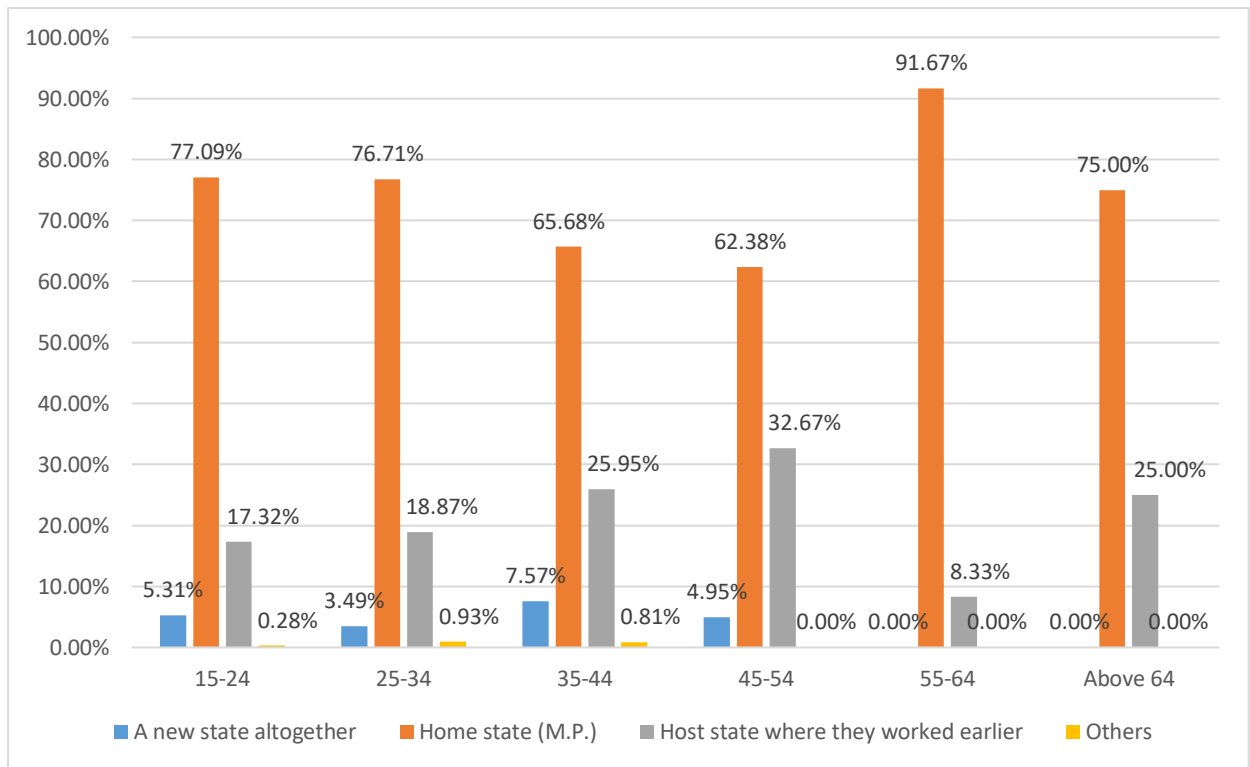


Figure 32: Current location and Age-bracket (2849 responses)

- Out of the 2849 respondents, the majority of the respondents across age-brackets were currently located in their home state.
- Respondents in the higher age-brackets (45-64 years) were more likely to stay back in their home state while respondents in the younger age-brackets (15-44 years) were more likely to return to their host state.

28.3 Current location and Gender

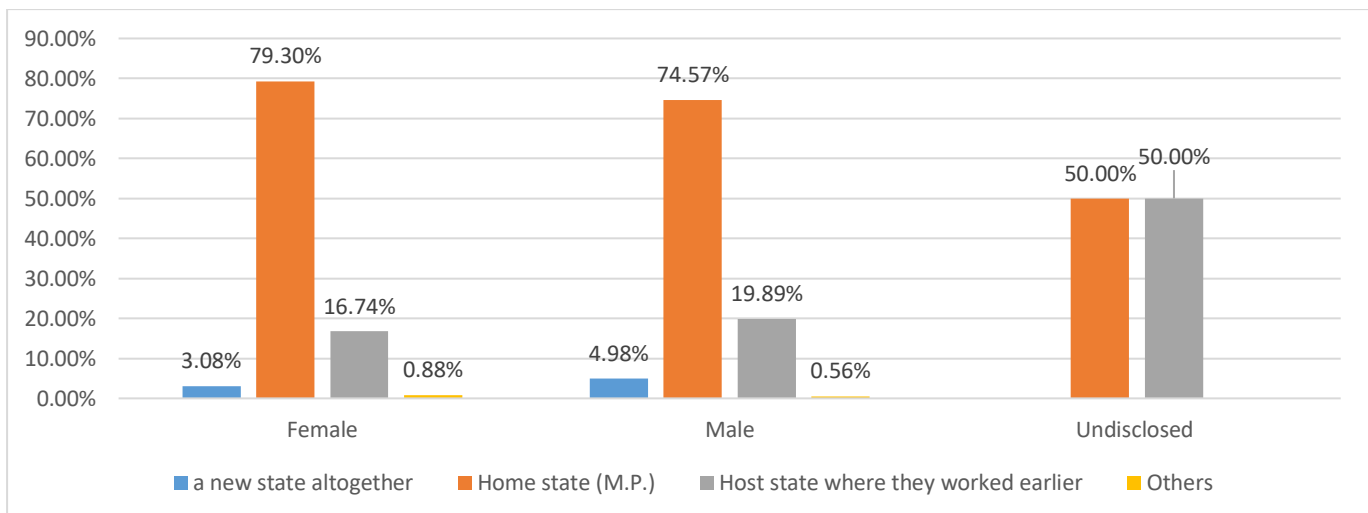


Figure 33: Current location and Gender (2901 responses)

- Male respondents were more likely to return to their host state as compared to their female counterparts. This could be because male respondents, on average earned more money than females, as observed in section 9.1. Hence, returning to the host state might be more monetarily beneficial for males. Moreover, the majority of modes of public transport had yet not started functioning and could have acted as a hindrance to relocating for female respondents.

28.4. Current location and current Industry of employment

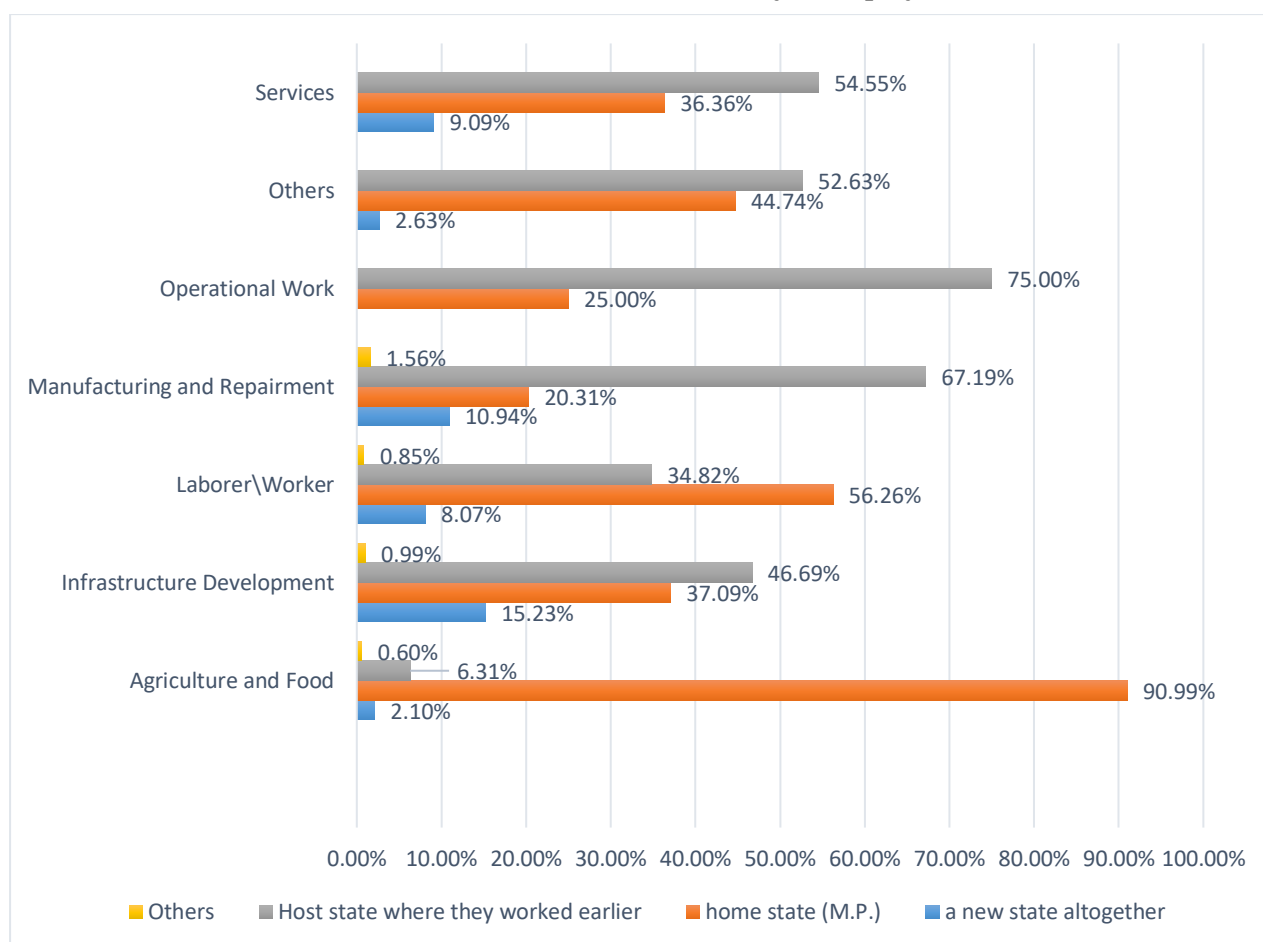


Figure 34: Current location and Industry (1628 responses)

- Around 91% (303 responses) of the respondents who engaged in the Agriculture and Food industry stayed back in M.P. This high proportion could be attributable to many respondents working on their lands.
- A higher percentage of respondents who were in the Services, Operational Work, and Manufacturing industries returned to their host state. These industries also provided a higher proportion of fixed income jobs as observed in section 8.5, this security could have motivated the respondents to relocate.

28.5. Current location and current Income group

Income Group	Current Location				Grand Total
	A new state altogether	Home state (M.P.)	Host state where they worked earlier	Others	
Below 250	10.89%	54.24%	15.24%	30.00%	35.27% (424)
₹ 250-300/day	1.98%	0.48%	0.64%	0.00%	0.67% (8)
₹ 300-350/day	21.78%	18.88%	24.03%	10.00%	21.05% (253)
₹ 350-400/day	18.81%	8.96%	19.53%	30.00%	14.06% (169)
₹ 400-500/day	16.83%	4.64%	22.53%	10.00%	12.65% (152)
₹ 500-650/day	8.91%	3.04%	10.51%	10.00%	6.49% (78)
More than 650	5.94%	1.76%	4.29%	0.00%	3.08% (37)

Others	14.85%	8.00%	3.22%	10.00%	6.74% (81)
Grand Total	100% (101)	100% (625)	100% (466)	100% (10)	100% (1202)

Table 15: Current location and current income group (1202 responses)

- Out of the respondents who relocated to their host state, the highest proportion of around 40% (186 responses) are earning average or below income of 300-350 income group.¹⁸
- Employed respondents in a new state were relatively earning more than employed respondents in their home state.
- More than half of the employed respondents in the home state are in the income group below ₹ 250/day while around 73% (460 responses) respondents were in the average or below income group.
- Additionally, 77 respondents answered that they weren't employed, but were earning wages which might suggest that they are self-employed or engaged in farming and other personal occupations. The breakup of these respondents is given below:

Income group (Row)	Current Location (Column)			
	A new state altogether	Home state (M.P.)	Host state where they worked earlier	Others
Below 250	1	28	1	-
₹ 250-300/day	-	1	-	-
₹ 300-350/day	-	9	-	-
₹ 350-400/day	2	7	1	-
₹ 400-500/day	-	4	2	-
₹ 500-650/day	-	1	1	1
₹ 500-650/day	-	1	-	-
More than 650	-	1	-	-
Others	-	14	1	1
Grand Total	3	66	6	2

Table 16: Unemployed respondents with wages (77 responses)

- A significant proportion of the unemployed respondents, around 39% (30 responses) are in the income group below ₹250/day.

¹⁸ The average current income group of ₹300-350/day has been considered in accordance with Annexure 16.

29. Reasons to move out of host state and return to M.P. analysis¹⁹

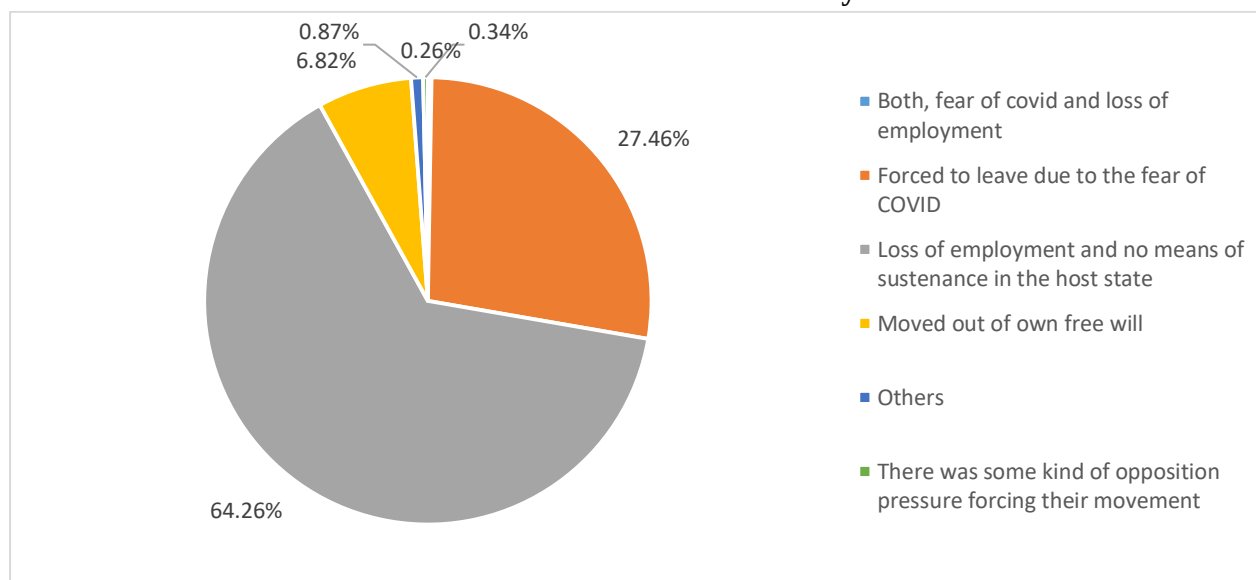


Figure 35: Reasons to move out of host state and return to M.P. (2655 responses)

- Out of 2655 respondents who answered this question, loss of employment was the predominant reason with around 64% (1706 responses) followed by fear of Covid with around 28% (729 responses).

29.1 Reasons to come back to M.P. and pre-Covid Industry

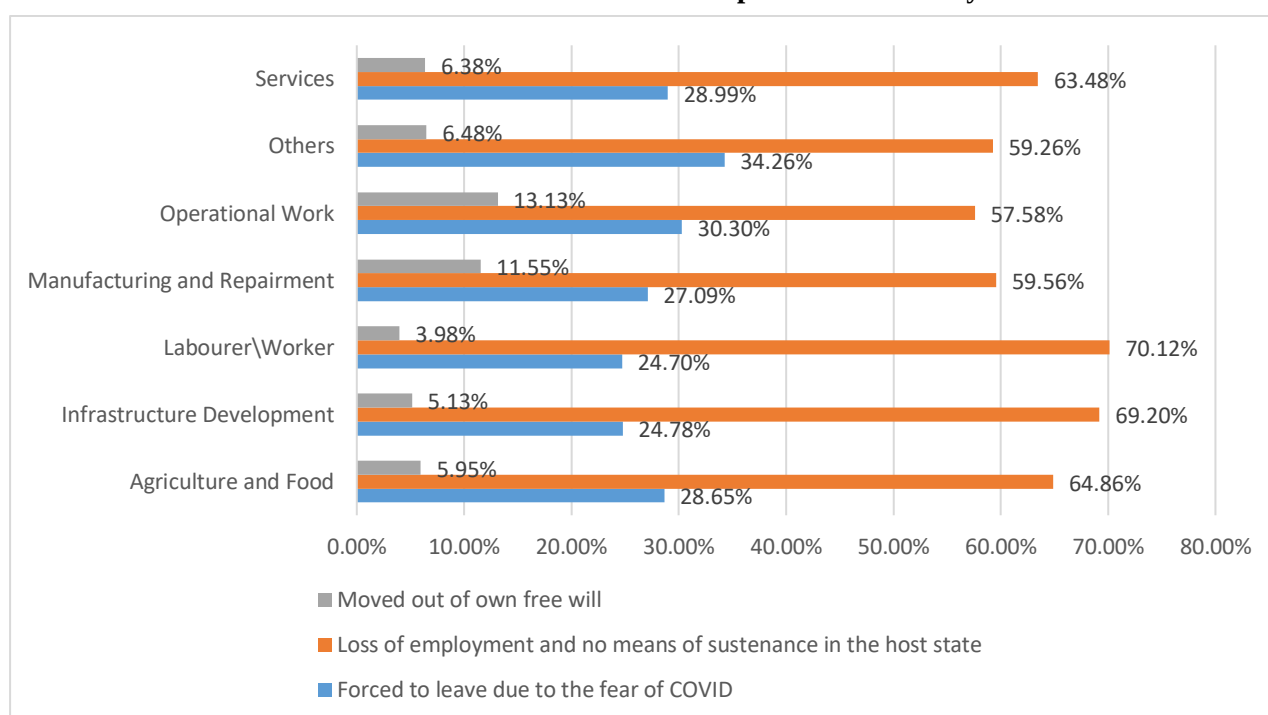


Figure 36: pre-Covid industry wise distribution of reasons to come back to M.P. (2503 responses)

- Labour and Worker industry was the worst-hit industry to force respondents out of host state due to loss of employment followed by Infrastructural Development and Agriculture and Food industry.
- Loss of employment was the primary reason to move out across respondents of all genders, categories, age brackets and income groups.

¹⁹ For respondents who mentioned the reasons to move out of host state, a list of the various responses under the broader categories has been annexed herewith as Annexure 11.

30. Expectation of duration of stay in M.P.²⁰

- Out of 2730 respondents who answered this question, 68.02% (1857 responses) of the respondents indicated that they saw their arrival during the lockdown as a temporary stay until they could find employment.

30.1 Expectation of duration of stay in M.P. and Age-bracket

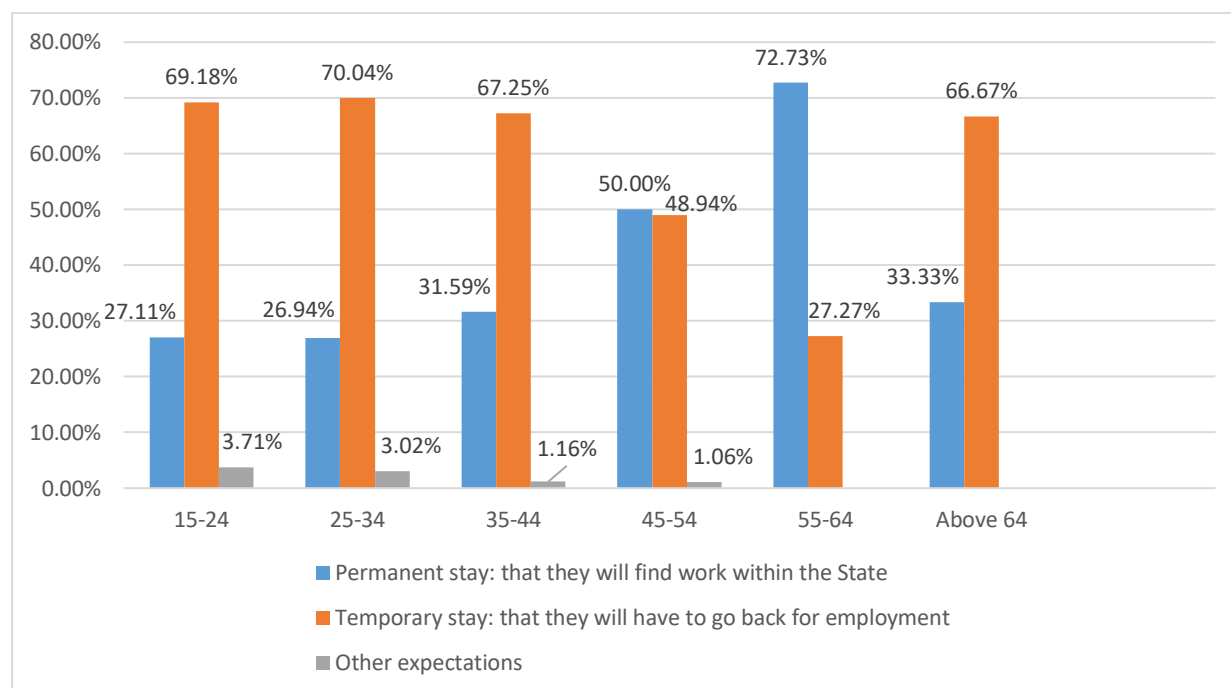


Figure 37: Expectation of duration of stay in M.P. and Age-bracket (2674 responses)

- The expectation to stay back permanently was more prominent in the higher age groups (45 years and above).
- Respondents from younger age groups were more likely to treat it as a temporary stay. As we proceed to higher Age-brackets the expectation of the stay being permanent increases.

30.2 Expectation of duration of stay in M.P. and pre-Covid Kind of employment

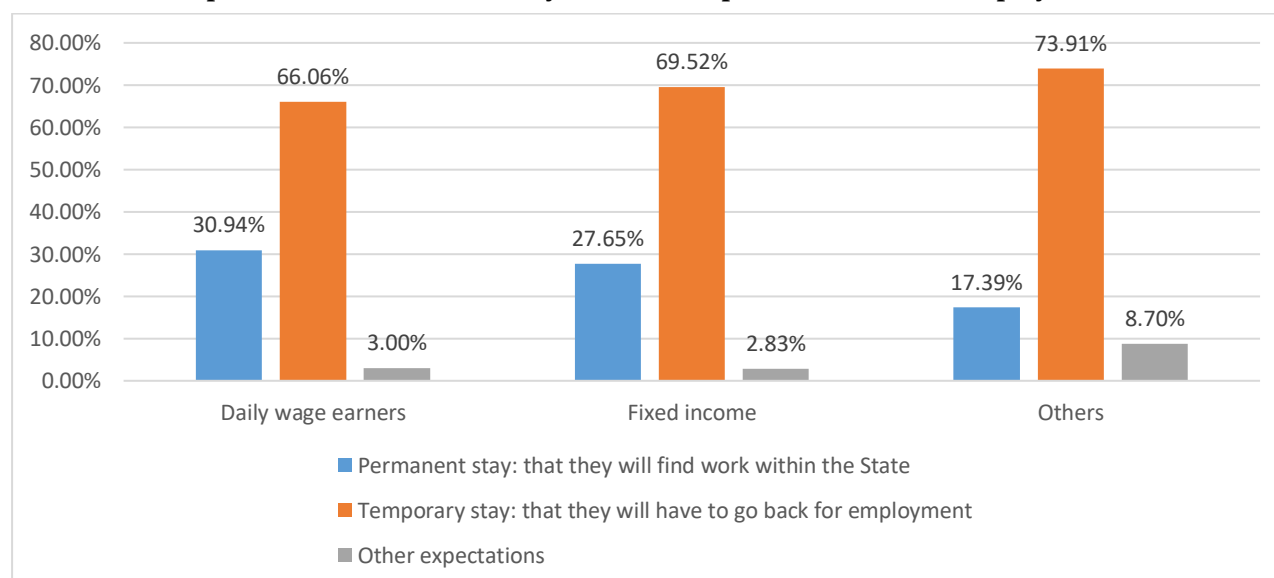


Figure 38: Expectation of duration of stay in M.P. and pre-Covid Kind of employment (2705 responses)

²⁰ For respondents who mentioned the expectation of state in MP, a list of the various responses under the broader categories has been annexed herewith as Annexure 13.

- Out of the 2705 respondents, a majority of the respondents across employment kind were likely to relocate to their host state according to job availability. 73.91% of respondents who didn't have a defined income structure were more likely to relocate according to job availability.

30.3 Expectation of duration of stay in M.P. and pre-Covid Industry

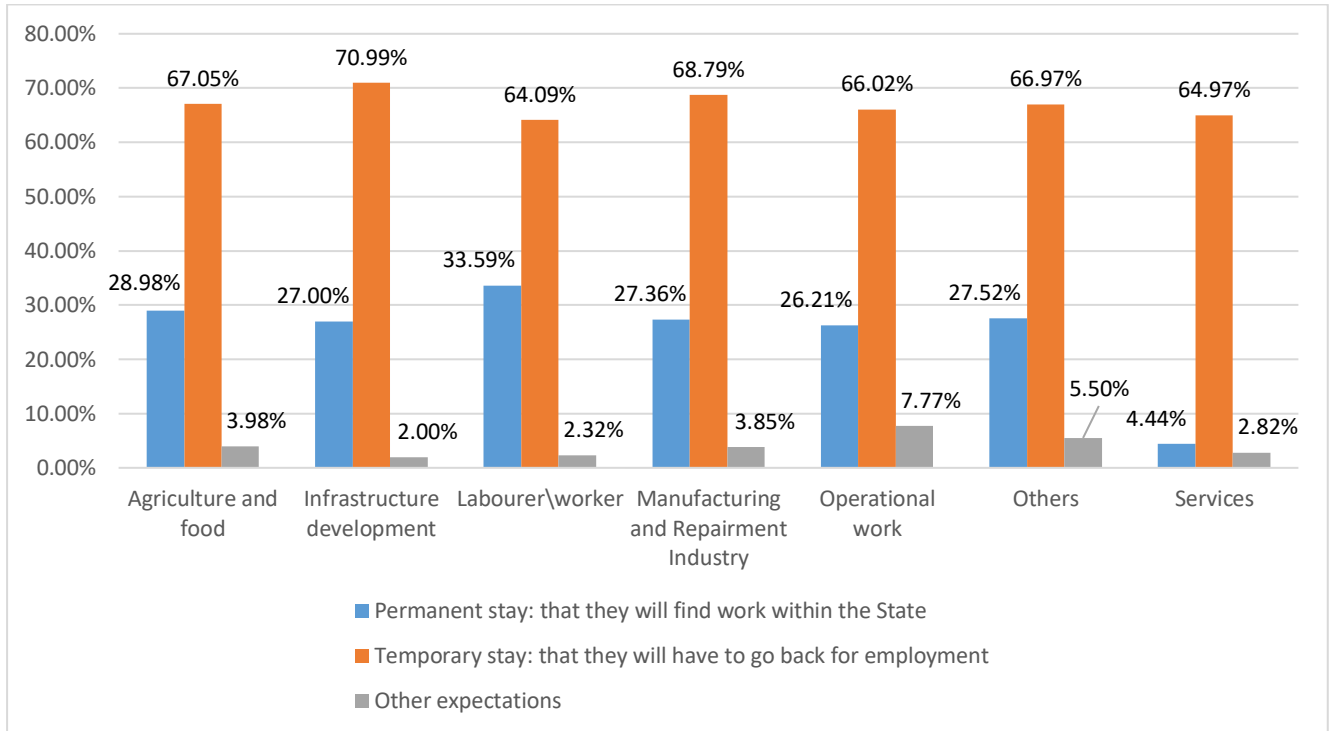


Figure 39: Expectation of duration of stay in M.P. and pre-Covid Industry (2568 responses)

- Out of the 2568 respondents, most respondents across various industries had expected their arrival in M.P. to be temporary. Out of the respondents who wanted to stay back permanently, the labour and worker industry had a higher proportion with 33.59% (87 responses).

30.4 Expectation of duration of stay in M.P. and pre-Covid Income group

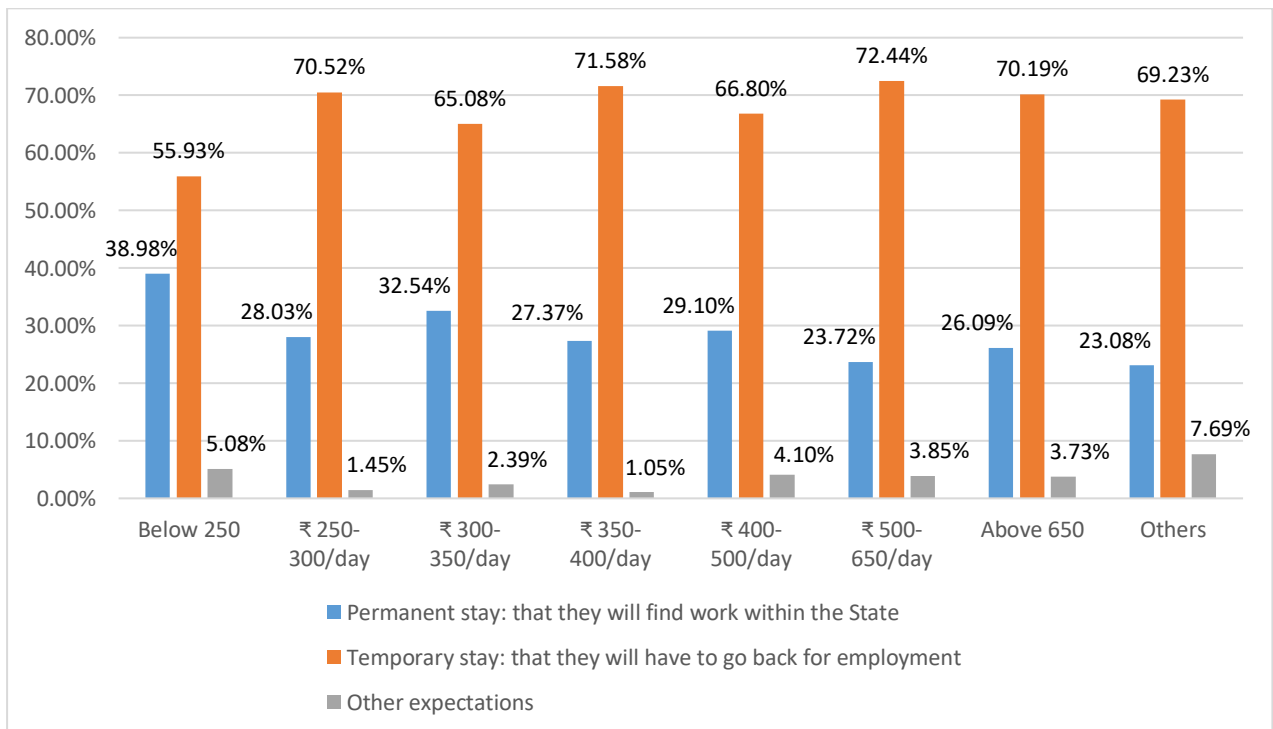


Figure 40: Expectation of duration of stay in M.P. pre-Covid income group (2678 responses)

- Out of the 2678 respondents, most respondents across all income groups expected their stay to be temporary.

- Respondents belonging to the lowest wage group i.e., below ₹ 250 had the highest expectations, 38.98% (69 responses) of their stay being permanent.
- Respondents belonging to the lower-income groups were more likely to stay back permanently. As we move towards higher income groups respondents were more likely to relocate for work, ₹ 400-500 income group being the exception.

31. Future plans of movement with regard to employment²¹

- Out of 2830 respondents who answered this question, 53.07% (1502 responses) of the respondents wished to find work in their home state of M.P. This was followed by 40.18% (1137 responses) of the respondents wanting to leave the State for work. At 3.50%, the responses for staying in any place (so long as employment was there) were much lesser.

32. Reasons to relocate post-lockdown²²

- Out of 947 respondents who answered this question, 92.18% (873 responses) of the respondents moved out because of employment reasons. 6.86% (65 responses) of the respondents moved because of safety from Covid and family being in other states. 0.95% (9 responses) of the respondents cited other reasons as mentioned in Annexure 12.
- Additionally, expectation of re-employment was the biggest reason to move out across respondents of all genders, caste, age groups, and income brackets.

33. Status of education of children²³

Educational Status	Total Respondents
Children are enrolled in nearby institutions now	8.72% (97)
Children do not have access to smartphones/internet for online classes	8.72% (97)
Children have always lived and studied in MP only	47.12% (524)
Children were enrolled in Maharashtra and have now dropped out of school/college	13.31% (148)
Others	22.12% (246)

Table 17: Status of education of children (1112 responses)

- Out of 1112 respondents who answered this question, around 47.12% (524 responses) indicated that their children stayed back and studied in M.P.
- Around 22% (246 responses) of respondents representing the 'Others' category contain respondents who did not have children (107) and other respondents whose children have completed schooling.
- Around 22% (245 responses) respondents had children whose education was halted due to lack of access to smartphones or them dropping out of school because of enrolment in the host state.

²¹ For respondents who mentioned the future plans with regards to employment, a list of the various responses under the 'other' category has been annexed herewith as Annexure 18.

²² For respondents who mentioned the reasons to relocate post lockdown, a list of the various responses under the broader categories has been annexed herewith as Annexure 12.

²³ For respondents who mentioned the status of children's education, a list of the various responses under the broader industry categories has been annexed herewith as Annexure 14.

34. Current employment status

- Out of 2864 respondents, around 56% (1606 responses) are currently unemployed as opposed to around 44% (1258 responses) who are employed.

34.1 Current employment status and Category

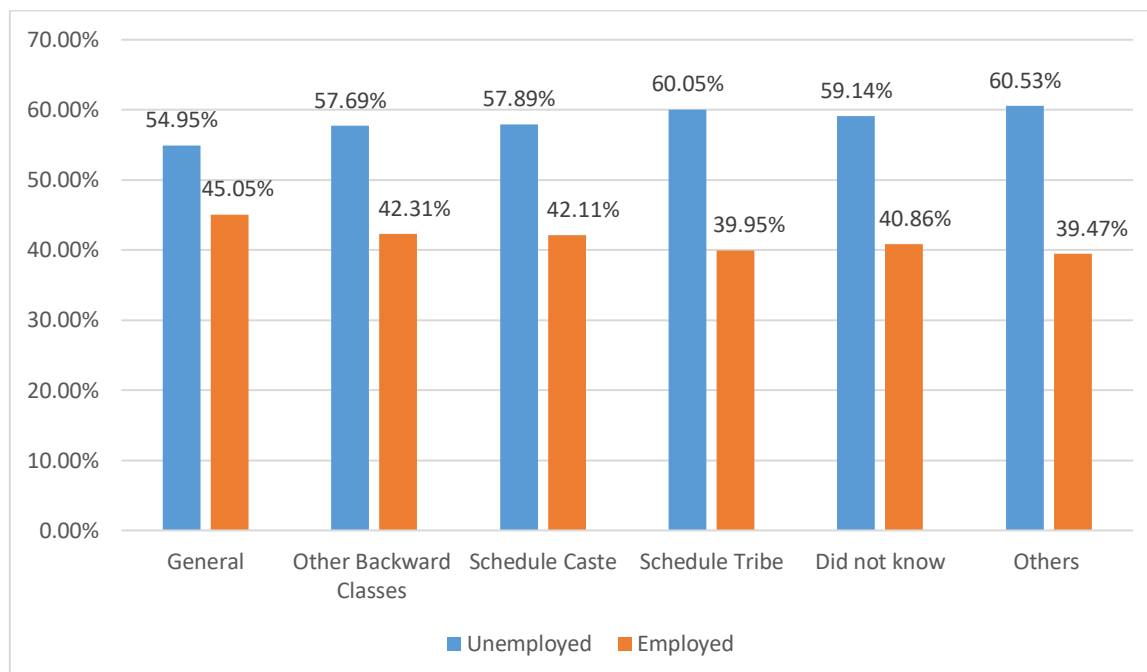


Figure 41: Current employment status and Category (2593 responses)

- Out of the 2593 respondents, the number of unemployed respondents is higher than the number of employed respondents across all categories.
- The respondents from the General category were more likely to be employed post lockdown as opposed to respondents from other categories.

34.2 Current employment status and Age-bracket

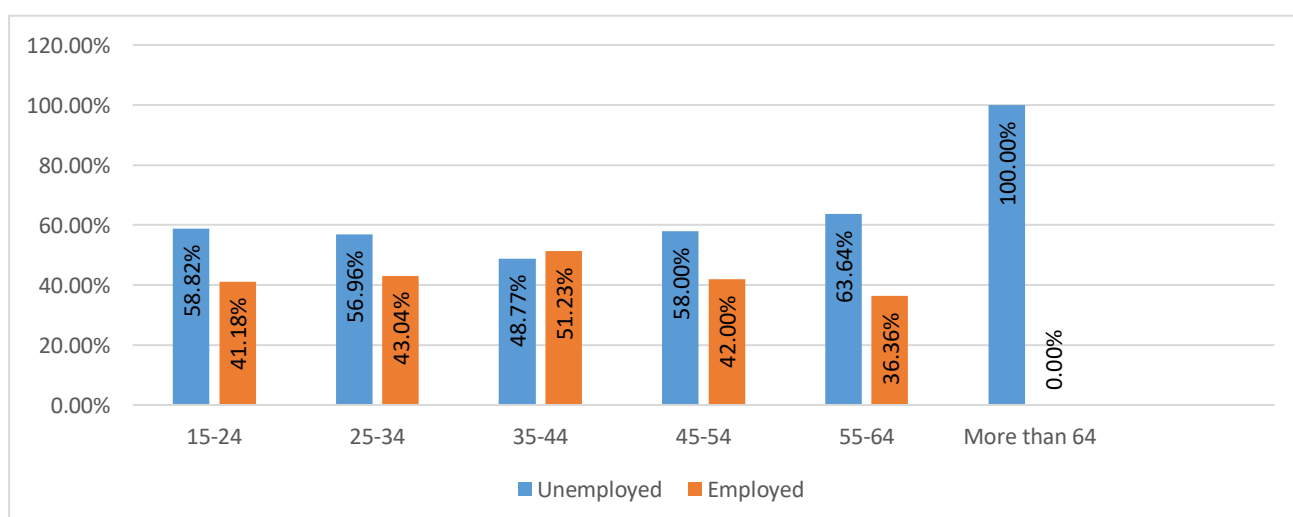


Figure 42: Current employment status and Age-bracket (2800 responses)

- Out of 2800 respondents who informed us of their current employment status, around 57% (1588 responses) were unemployed. Of this 57%, the majority of 84.4% (1340 responses) were the respondents falling in the bracket of 15-34 years.
- The only age-bracket with a higher number of employed respondents, though partially, was 35-44 years which can be attributed to their ability to relocate.

34.3 Current employment status and Gender

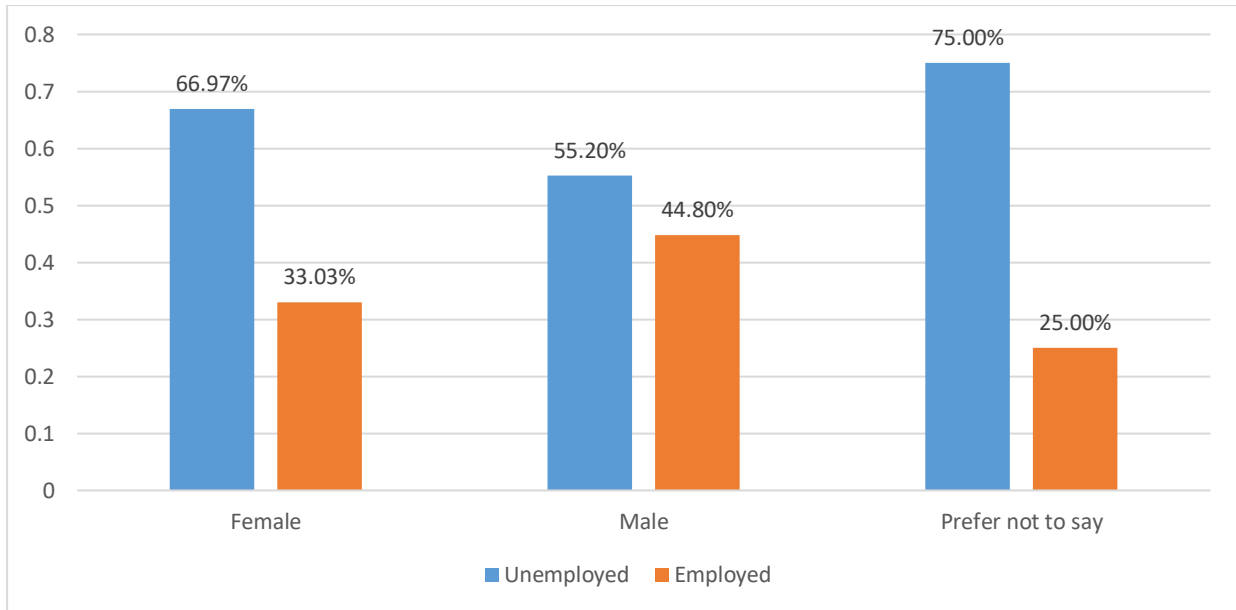


Figure 43: Current employment status and Gender (2848 responses)

- Out of the 2848 respondents, 44.08% males (1175 responses) were employed as compared to only 33.03% females (73 responses). Out of 4 respondents who preferred not to say their gender, only one was employed.
- While most respondents were unemployed post lockdown, female respondents were more likely to be unemployed than male respondents.
- Female respondents are more likely to be unemployed because pre-Covid females were predominantly employed in labour-intensive industries²⁴, in low-paying income groups²⁵ with daily wage jobs than fixed income jobs²⁶.

34.4 Current employment status and Education

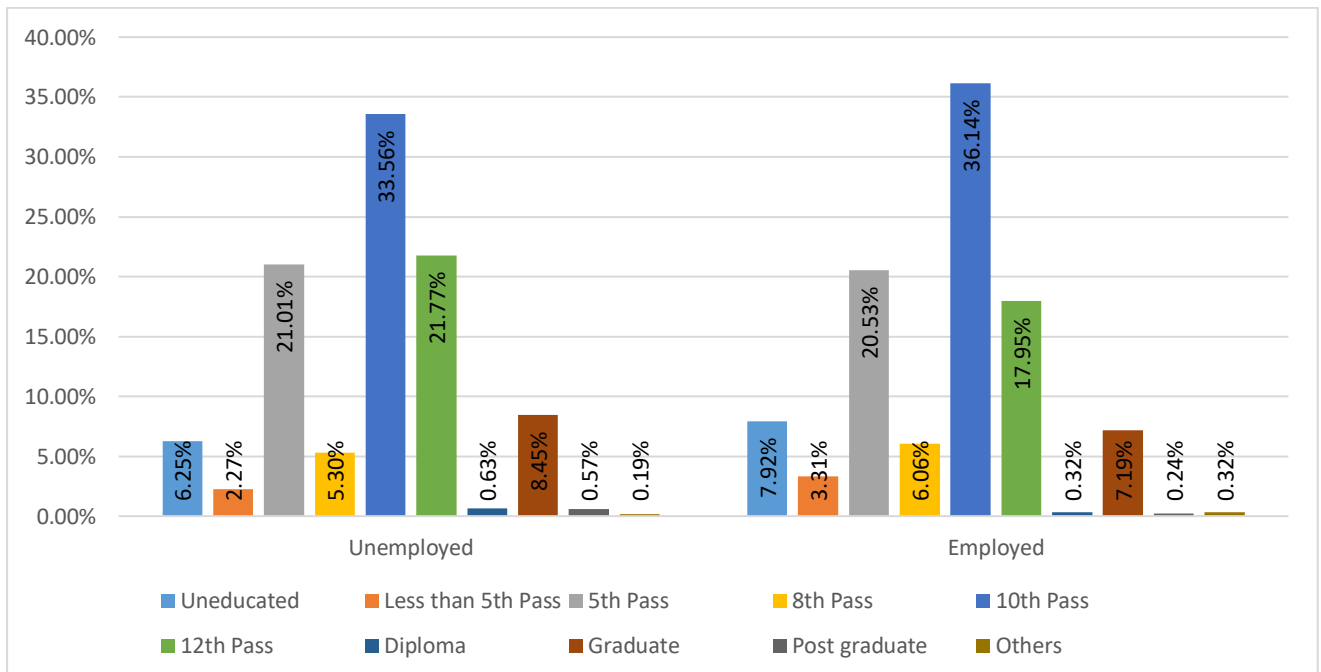


Figure 44: Current employment status and Education (2822 responses)

²⁴ Section 9.2 indicates that female respondents were more likely to be engaged for labour intensive employment.

²⁵ Section 10.1 indicates that there exists gender disparity in terms of incomes earned by males and females, where higher proportion of females are more likely to get low income.

²⁶ Section 8.1 supports the indication that female respondents were more likely to be given daily wages than an employment with a fixed income.

- Interestingly, there is no perceptible correlation between the employment status of the respondents post lockdown and their educational qualifications.

34.5 Current employment status and pre-Covid Kind of employment

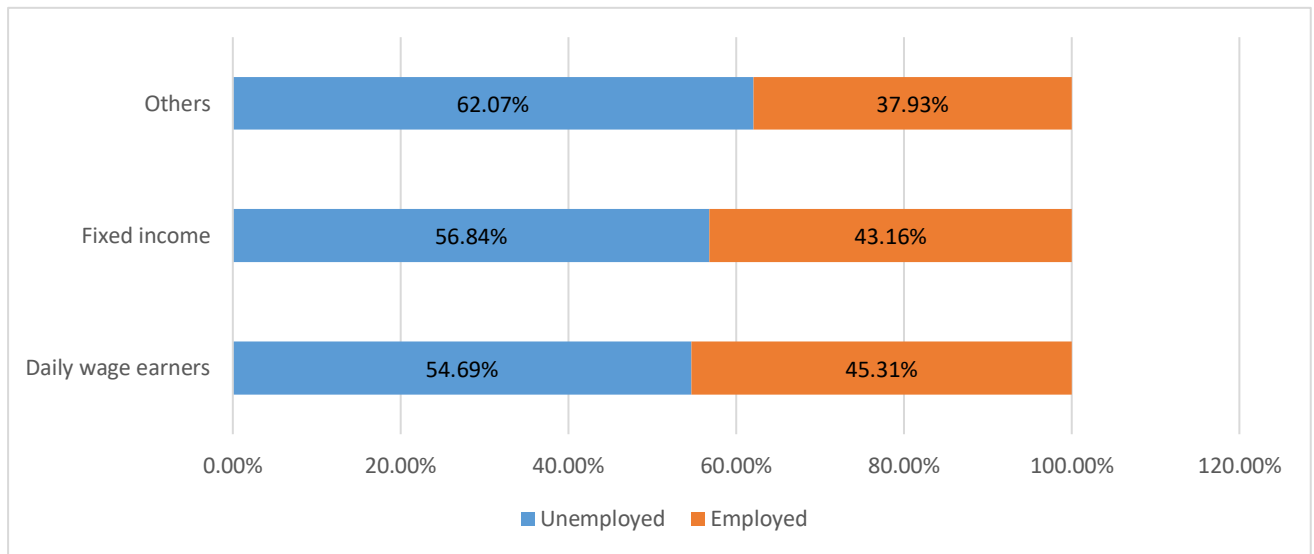


Figure 45 Current employment status pre-covid Kind of employment (2826 responses)

- Even though more than half of the respondents in all income groups are unemployed, respondents who earned a fixed income before lockdown were able to get employment more than the respondents who earned daily wages.

34.6. Current employment status and pre-Covid Industry

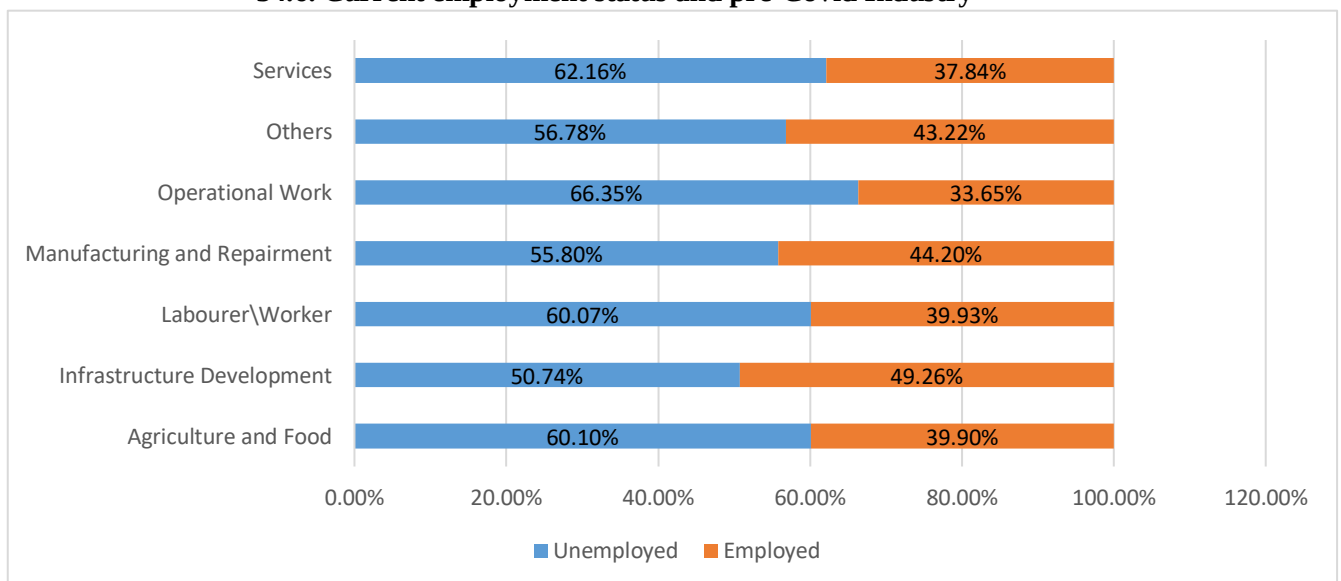


Figure 46: Current employment status and Industry (2689 responses)

- Most of the industries have not been able to re-employ respondents to the level at which they were employed before lockdown. The Infrastructure industry has been able to re-employ the highest number of respondents, 49.26% (536 responses) after the lockdown.

35. Current Industry²⁷

- Out of the 1209 respondents who were employed at the time of the survey, the highest proportion, with around 36% (439 responses), worked in the Labourer/Worker industry. This was followed by the Infrastructure Development industry with around 23% (283 responses)

²⁷ For respondents who mentioned industry they are currently working in, a list of the various responses under the broader Industrial categories has been annexed herewith as Annexure 15.

being employed, and Agriculture and Food industry with around 22% (271 responses) respondents being employed.

- This is substantially different from the pre-Covid scenario wherein the Infrastructure Industry was the biggest employer with around 40% (1109 responses) respondents, and Labourer/Workers only comprised around 10% (274 responses) respondents.

35.1 Current Industry and Category

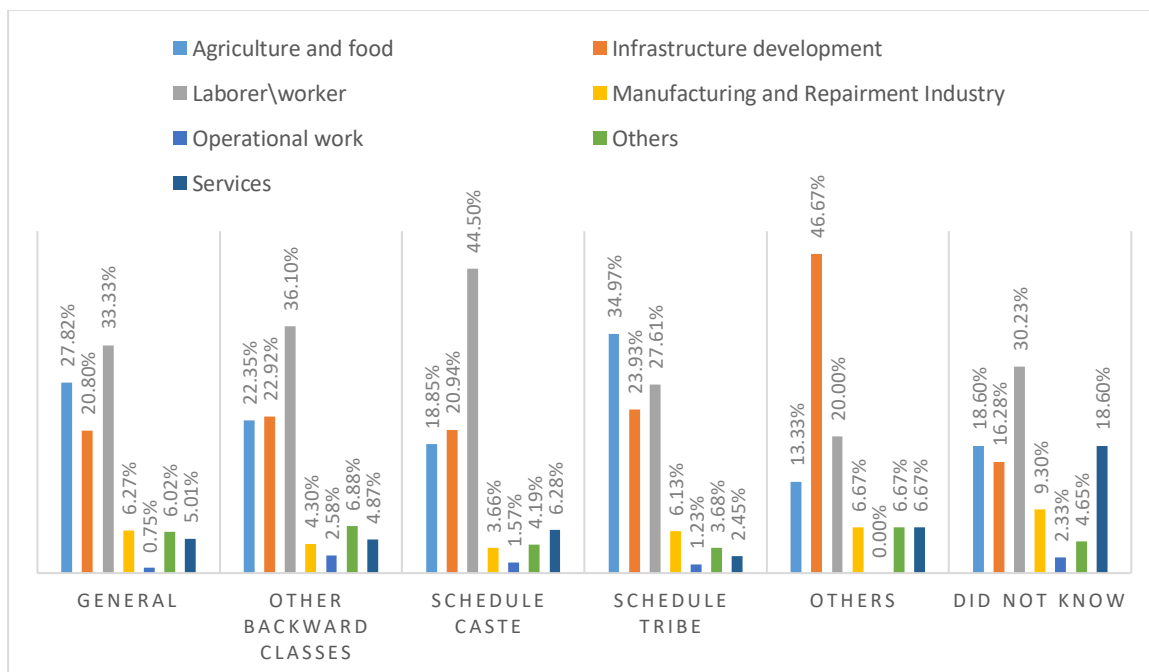


Figure 47: Current Industry and Category (1160 responses)

- No industry predominantly employs respondents from a particular category suggesting a lack of category/caste-based barrier in entering different industries.

35.2 Current Industry and Age-bracket

Occupation	Age Bracket					Total
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	
Agriculture and Food	41.79%	45.15%	10.07%	2.24%	0.75%	100% (268)
Infrastructure Development	35.77%	44.16%	15.69%	4.01%	0.36%	100% (274)
Labourer\Worker	32.13%	43.48%	20.29%	4.11%	0.00%	100% (414)
Manufacturing and Repairment	41.27%	42.86%	12.70%	3.17%	0.00%	100% (63)
Operational Work	42.11%	57.89%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100% (19)
Others	31.34%	50.75%	16.42%	0.00%	1.49%	100% (67)
Services	37.10%	45.16%	9.68%	8.06%	0.00%	100% (62)
Grand Total	36.08% (421)	44.73% (522)	15.34% (179)	3.51% (41)	0.34% (4)	100% (1167)

Table 18: Current Industry and Age-bracket (1167 responses)

- As we progressed towards higher age-brackets, the proportion of respondents working in each industry reduced. Most of the industries employed respondents within the range of 15-34 years.

35.3 Current Industry and Gender

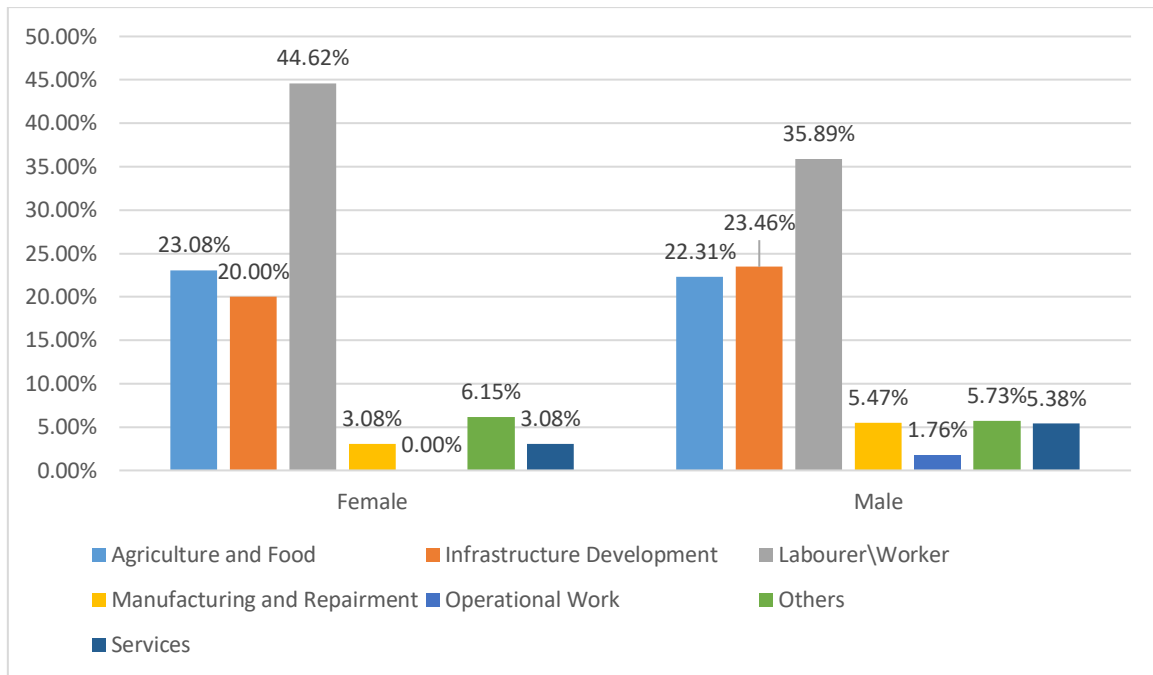


Figure 48: Current Industry and Gender (1200 responses)

- Out of the 1200 respondents, more female respondents, with around 68% (44 responses), were employed in the Agriculture and Food Industry and Labour industry combined. In these sectors, male respondents had a proportion of around 58% (660 responses). It shows that female respondents were more likely to get labour intensive work since a greater proportion were working in daily wage jobs (as pointed out in section 7.1 Kind of employment and Gender)
- As observed in section 34.3 Current employment status and Gender, female respondents were less likely to seek employment because of the low-paying, labour-intensive, and daily wage work available to them.
- The only respondent who did not prefer to answer their gender was employed in the labourer/worker industry.

35.4 Current Industry and Education

Education	Occupation							Grand Total
	Agriculture and Food	Infrastructure Development	Labourer\Worker	Manufacturing and Repairment	Operational Work	Others	Services	
Uneducated	10.04%	6.71%	8.84%	0.00%	5.26%	4.69%	9.52%	7.89% (94)
Less than 5th Pass	2.60%	4.59%	4.42%	0.00%	0.00%	3.13%	0.00%	3.44% (41)
5th Pass	24.16%	20.85%	21.63%	15.87%	5.26%	15.63%	15.87%	20.82% (248)
8th Pass	6.32%	6.71%	7.21%	3.17%	5.26%	3.13%	4.76%	6.30% (75)
10th Pass	42.38%	35.69%	35.12%	42.86%	26.32%	32.81%	28.57%	36.69% (448)

								(437)
12th Pass	11.15%	18.02%	17.67%	22.22%	31.58%	23.44%	15.87%	16.96 % (202)
Diploma	0.00%	0.00%	0.47%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.59%	0.25%(3)
Graduate	2.60%	6.71%	4.42%	15.87%	26.32%	14.06%	23.81%	7.05%(84)
Post graduate	0.37%	0.71%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.25%(3)
Others	0.37%	0.00%	0.23%	0.00%	0.00%	3.13%	0.00%	0.34%(4)
Grand total	100% (269)	100% (283)	100% (430)	100% (63)	100% (19)	100% (64)	100% (63)	100% (1191)

Table 19: Current Industry and educational qualifications (1191 responses)

- Respondents with lower education qualification were more likely to be employed in the Agriculture and Labour/Worker industries.
- Manufacturing and Repairment industry, Services and the Operational Work industries required respondents with higher qualifications. A larger proportion of respondents employed in these industries were 10th pass and above.

35.5 Current Industry and pre-Covid Income group

Current Industry	Income Groups								Total
	Below 250 day	₹ 250-300/day	₹ 300-350/day	₹ 350-400/day	₹ 400-500/day	₹ 500-650/day	More than 650/day	Others	
Agriculture and Food	7.43%	15.99%	21.93%	23.79%	15.24%	10.41%	5.20%	0.00%	100% (269)
Infrastructure Development	5.71%	8.21%	20.71%	22.50%	20.71%	13.21%	8.57%	0.36%	100% (280)
Labourer\Worker	8.97%	14.71%	23.91%	21.61%	19.31%	8.74%	2.53%	0.23%	100% (435)
Manufacturing and Repairment	6.35%	6.35%	9.52%	26.98%	26.98%	14.29%	9.52%	0.00%	100% (63)
Operational Work	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	16.67%	22.22%	27.78%	5.56%	5.56%	100% (18)
Others	8.82%	8.82%	13.24%	14.71%	20.59%	27.94%	4.41%	1.47%	100% (68)
Services	8.20%	13.11%	9.84%	16.39%	21.31%	16.39%	9.84%	4.92%	100% (61)
Total	7.54% (90)	12.40% (148)	20.60% (246)	21.86% (261)	19.35% (231)	12.23% (146)	5.44% (65)	0.59% (7)	100% (1194)

Table 20: Current Industry and pre-Covid Income group (1194 responses)

- Across all industries, the highest proportion of respondents were employed between income groups ₹ 300 to 500/day except in the Operational Work industry where the highest proportion of respondents were employed within income group ₹ 500-650/day.

36. Current Income groups²⁸

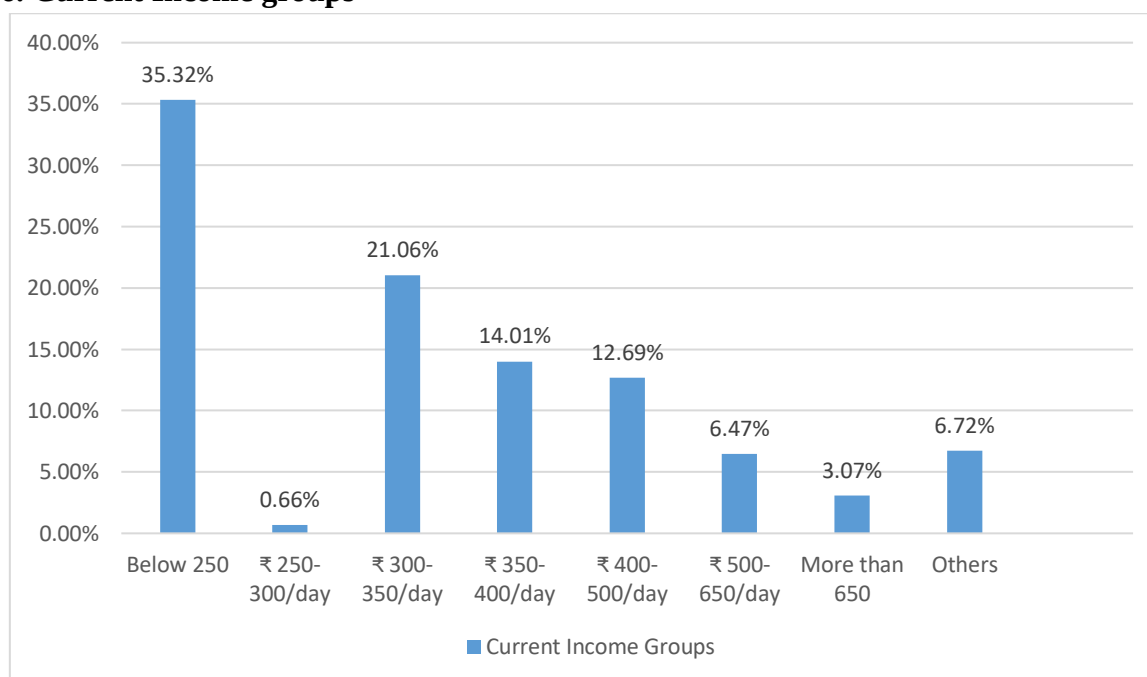


Figure 49: Current Income groups (1206 responses)

- The highest proportion of the respondents, 35.32% (426 responses) were earning below ₹250/day followed by 21.06% (254 responses) earning in the average income group of ₹300-350/day.
- Around 36% (437 responses) of the respondents earned more than the average income group of ₹300-350/day.

36.1 Current Income groups and Category

Occupation	Category						Grand Total
	General	Other Backward Classes	Schedule Caste	Schedule Tribe	Did not know	Others	
Below 250	36.01%	32.73%	35.15%	38.89%	39.47%	20.00%	35.15% (380)
₹ 250-300/day	1.04%	0.30%	1.21%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.65% (7)
₹ 300-350/day	18.13%	20.72%	31.52%	22.22%	15.79%	20.00%	21.46% (232)
₹ 350-400/day	17.36%	14.11%	9.70%	10.42%	15.79%	13.33%	14.15% (153)

²⁸ For respondents who mentioned their income post-lockdown, a list of the various responses under the broader income groups has been annexed herewith as Annexure 16. As per Annexure 16, the below-average income groups include incomes less than ₹250/day and ₹250-300/day, the average income group includes income of ₹300-350/day, the above-average income groups include ₹350-400/day, ₹400-500/day, ₹500-650/day, and more than ₹650/day.

₹ 400-500/day	12.69%	13.51%	10.91%	9.72%	7.89%	33.33%	12.40% (134)
₹ 500-650/day	4.92%	7.81%	6.06%	5.56%	13.16%	0.00%	6.29% (68)
More than 650	4.15%	3.30%	1.82%	1.39%	0.00%	6.67%	3.05% (33)
Others	5.70%	7.51%	3.64%	11.81%	7.89%	6.67%	6.85% (74)
Grand Total	100.00% (386)	100.00% (333)	100.00% (165)	100.00% (144)	100.00% (38)	100.00% (15)	100.00% (1081)

Table 21: Category and current Income groups (1081 responses)

- The respondents belonging to the ST category had a higher share, with around 39% (56 responses), in the lowest income group of below ₹250/day.
- Respondents belonging to the General and OBC category had a higher share, at around 39% (151 responses and 129 responses respectively) in the above average income group.
- Respondents belonging to SC and ST categories were likely to have a higher share in the average or below-average income groups. As we move to higher-income groups, the share of respondents from SC and ST categories decreases, while the share of respondents from General, and OBC increases.
- This situation was however not true pre-Covid, as evident in section 9.2. Over there, while SC respondents had a marginally lower share in higher-income groups, ST respondents were similar to General and OBC respondents.

36.2 Current Income groups and Gender

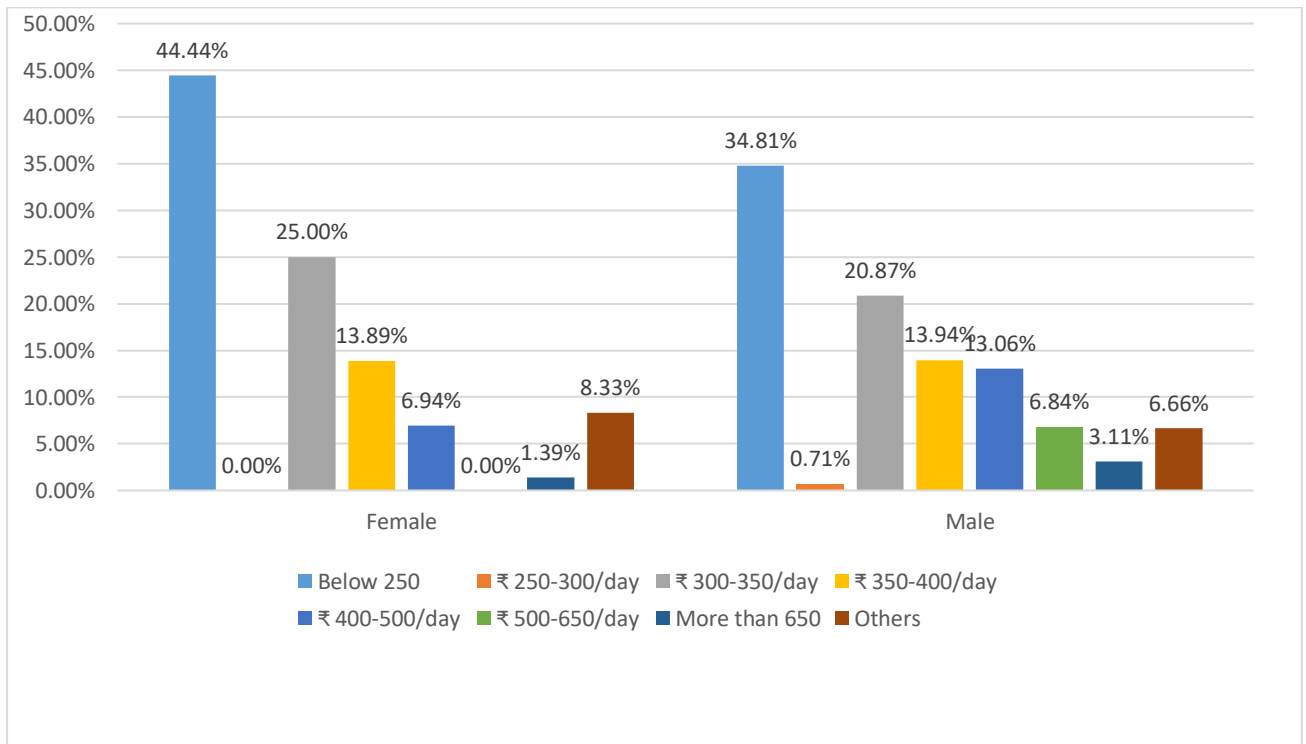


Figure 50: Current Income group and Gender (1199 responses)

- With around 70% (50 responses), female respondents had a higher share in the average or below-average income groups than male respondents whose share was 56% (635 responses).

As we progress towards the above-average income groups, the share of female respondents decreases while the share of male respondents increases.

- The only respondent who was employed and preferred not to disclose their gender earned ₹400-500/day.
- As observed in section 9.1. Income group and Gender, this trend is similar to that seen in the pre-Covid times, where higher proportions of female respondents were in the lower wage groups as compared to male respondents.

36.3 Current Income groups and Education

Wage	Education										Grand Total
	Uneducated	Less than 5th Pass	5th Pass	8th Pass	10th Pass	12th Pass	Diploma	Graduate	Post graduate	Others	
Below 250	11.90%	3.10%	26.67%	6.67%	34.29%	12.86%	0.48%	3.57%	0.00%	0.48%	100% (420)
₹ 250-300/day	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	62.50%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100% (8)
₹ 300-350/day	7.51%	3.56%	20.95%	8.70%	36.36%	18.18%	0.00%	4.35%	0.40%	0.00%	100% (253)
₹ 350-400/day	4.19%	2.40%	17.37%	4.19%	40.12%	23.35%	0.00%	7.78%	0.00%	0.60%	100% (167)
₹ 400-500/day	6.62%	2.65%	17.88%	3.97%	32.45%	24.50%	0.66%	11.26%	0.00%	0.00%	100% (151)
₹ 500-650/day	1.30%	2.60%	10.39%	6.49%	36.36%	25.97%	1.30%	15.58%	0.00%	0.00%	100% (77)
More than 650	2.70%	8.11%	16.22%	2.70%	35.14%	10.81%	0.00%	21.62%	2.70%	0.00%	100% (37)
Others	7.50%	5.00%	16.25%	2.50%	38.75%	17.50%	0.00%	10.00%	1.25%	1.25%	100% (80)
Grand Total	7.88% (94)	3.27% (39)	20.79% (248)	6.12% (73)	35.96% (429)	18.02% (215)	0.34% (4)	7.04% (84)	0.25% (3)	0.34% (4)	100% (1193)

Table 22: Current Income groups and Education (1193 responses)

- As shown in section 34.4 Current employment status and Education, educational qualifications did not guarantee employment in the post-Covid period as respondents with similar educational qualifications were present in both the employed and unemployed sections. However, the table above represents that once employed, educational qualifications has a direct bearing on the kind of income earned by the respondents. More respondents with higher educational qualifications had higher-paying jobs.

36.4 Current Income groups and pre-Covid kind of employment

Income groups	Employment Kind			Grand Total
	Daily wage earners	Fixed income	Others	
Below 250	43.35%	28.73%	0.00%	35.26% (421)
₹ 250-300/day	0.73%	0.63%	0.00%	0.67% (8)
₹ 300-350/day	22.77%	19.62%	25.00%	21.11% (252)

₹ 350-400/day	13.48%	14.76%	0.00%	14.07% (168)
₹ 400-500/day	9.65%	15.07%	25.00%	12.65% (151)
₹ 500-650/day	2.91%	9.58%	0.00%	6.45% (77)
More than 650	1.28%	4.55%	12.50%	3.10% (37)
Others	5.83%	7.06%	37.50%	6.70% (80)
Total Responses	100% (549)	100% (637)	100% (8)	100% (1194)

Table 23: Current Income groups and pre-Covid Employment (1194 responses)

- The respondents with a fixed income background had more likelihood to earn above average income with around 44% (280 responses) as compared to respondents working on daily wages who were around 27% (150 responses) in the same income group.

36.5 Current Income groups and current Industry

Income Groups	Industry							Grand Total
	Agriculture and Food	Infrastructure Development	Labourer\ Worker	Manufacturing and Repairment	Operational Work	Others	Services	
Below 250	63.86%	15.64%	41.06%	11.11%	5.26%	21.88%	29.03%	36.04% (421)
₹ 250-300/day	0.80%	0.73%	0.69%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.61%	0.68% (8)
₹ 300-350/day	13.25%	22.55%	26.38%	14.29%	5.26%	18.75%	19.35%	20.89% (244)
₹ 350-400/day	5.62%	18.91%	13.30%	23.81%	26.32%	14.06%	14.52%	13.87% (162)
₹ 400-500/day	2.41%	19.27%	9.17%	26.98%	31.58%	25.00%	14.52%	12.59% (147)
₹ 500-650/day	2.01%	10.55%	3.21%	11.11%	21.05%	4.69%	11.29%	5.91% (69)
More than 650	0.80%	6.55%	0.92%	7.94%	5.26%	6.25%	4.84%	3.17% (37)
Others	11.24%	5.82%	5.28%	4.76%	5.26%	9.38%	4.84%	6.85% (80)
Grand Total	100% (249)	100% (275)	100% (436)	100% (63)	100% (19)	100% (64)	100% (62)	1168 (100%)

Table 24: Current Income groups and current Industry (1168 responses)

- The Agriculture and Food industry employed the maximum number of respondents, with around 78% (194 responses), in the below-average and average income groups. It is followed by Labourer and Worker industry with around 68% (297 responses).

- The Operational Work industry was amongst the highest paying industry with around 79% (15 responses) respondents in the above average income groups.

37. Current beneficiaries of employment schemes²⁹

- Out of the 2512 respondents who responded to this question, a paltry 1.7% (42 responses) respondents were employed under any scheme in the district.

37.1 Current beneficiaries of employment schemes and Category

- Out of 38 scheme beneficiaries who answered the question, the highest number was OBC category respondents at 34.21% (13 responses). It was followed by ST category respondents at 28.95% (11 responses) and General category respondents at 26.32% (10 responses). SC category respondents benefitted the least with 10.52% (4 responses).

37.2 Current beneficiaries of employment schemes and Gender

- All of the 41 scheme beneficiaries who answered this question were male respondents suggesting no coverage of female beneficiaries under various employment schemes.

37.3 Current beneficiaries of employment schemes and Age-bracket

- Out of 41 beneficiary respondents who answered this question, the respondents from the age-bracket of 15-34 years benefitted the most at 68.29% (28 responses).

37.4 Current beneficiaries of employment schemes and pre-Covid Kind of employment

- Out of the 41 beneficiary respondents who answered this question, 35% (14 responses) respondents were daily wage earners and 65% (26 responses) respondents earned a fixed income before the pandemic.

38. Names of currently availed employment schemes

- Out of the 31 beneficiaries who were employed under the schemes and answered this question, the highest (12 responses) were beneficiaries of MGNREGA while others mentioned M.P. Rojgar Setu Yojana and Prime Minister Employment Generation Scheme.

39. Access to awareness programmes post arrival

- On their arrival to the home state, out of 2811 respondents, around 74% (2086 responses) of the respondents to this question mentioned not having any awareness/sensitization program, while another 16% (450 responses) weren't sure if they were informed or not.

²⁹ For respondents who are beneficiaries under state employment scheme post-covid lockdown, a list of the various responses under the broader categories has been annexed herewith as Annexure 17.

39.1 Access to awareness programmes post arrival and Category

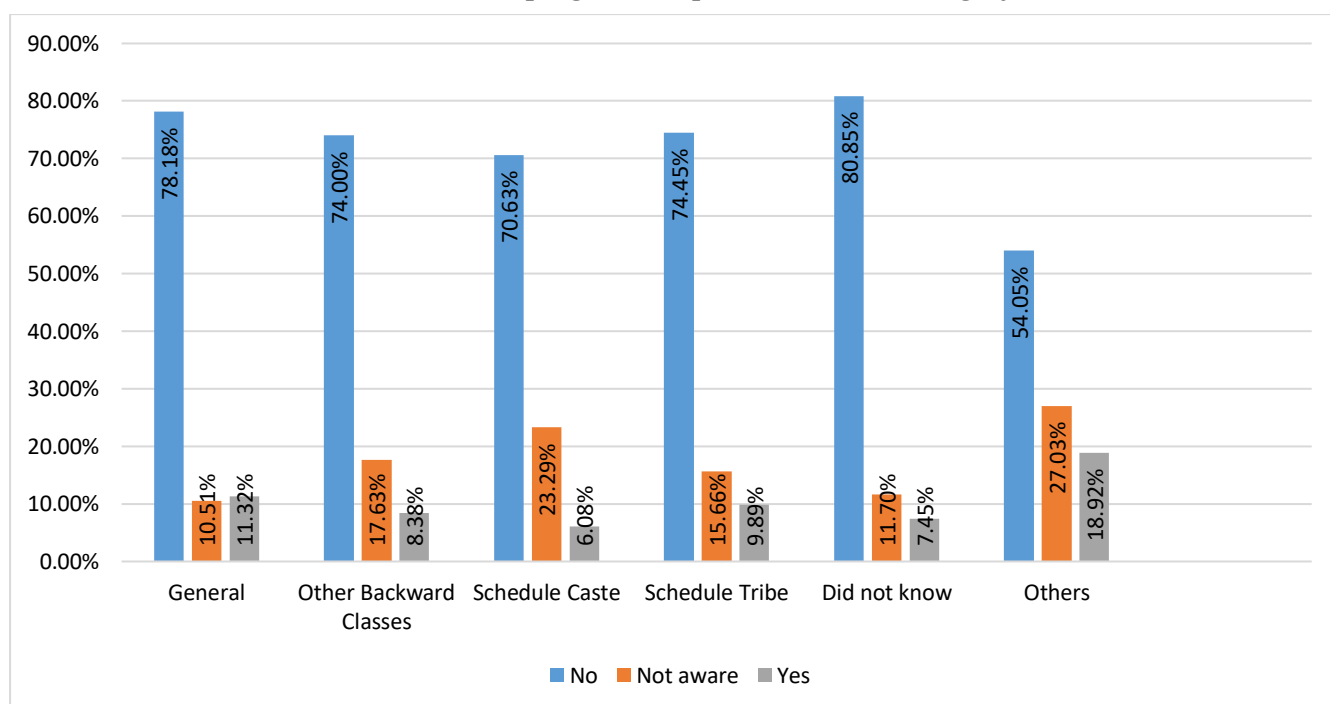


Figure 51: Access to awareness programmes post arrival and Category (2556 responses)

- There is no perceptible difference in the respondents belonging to the different castes. The respondents belonging to the General category were marginally more recipients of the awareness programmes.

39.2 Access to awareness programmes post arrival and Gender

- Around 8% of the female respondents (18 out of 219 respondents) and around 9% of the male respondents (256 out of 2573 respondents) had access to the awareness programs.

40. Availability of state counselling services

- Out of 2793 respondents, around 28% (777 responses) were not aware of any center/state aid camps for migrants in their area. Around 62% (1736 responses) claimed that there were no such camps available for their help. Only 10% (280 responses) of the respondents mentioned having counselling centers where they could get in touch with state officials.

41. Beneficiaries of Direct Bank Transfers (DBT)

- M.P. state government, in April 2020, had announced ₹1000 for accommodation and food arrangement as a relief measure for each labourer of the state stranded in other states.³⁰ To find out the efficacy of such direct bank transfers, we asked respondents whether they received similar benefits.
- Out of 2858 respondents, 88.5% (2531 responses) respondents had not received any direct benefit transfer. Around 11.5% (327 responses) of the respondents who did receive DBT, many mentioned not receiving the full amount.

³⁰ Mukesh Dubey, ₹ One thousand will be given to each labourer stranded in other states: CM Shri Chouhan (15/04/2020), available at https://prsindia.org/files/covid19/notifications/4106.MP_Financial_assistance_labor_Apr15.pdf, last seen on 10/05/2021.

41.1 Beneficiaries of Direct Bank Transfers and pre-Covid Kind of employment

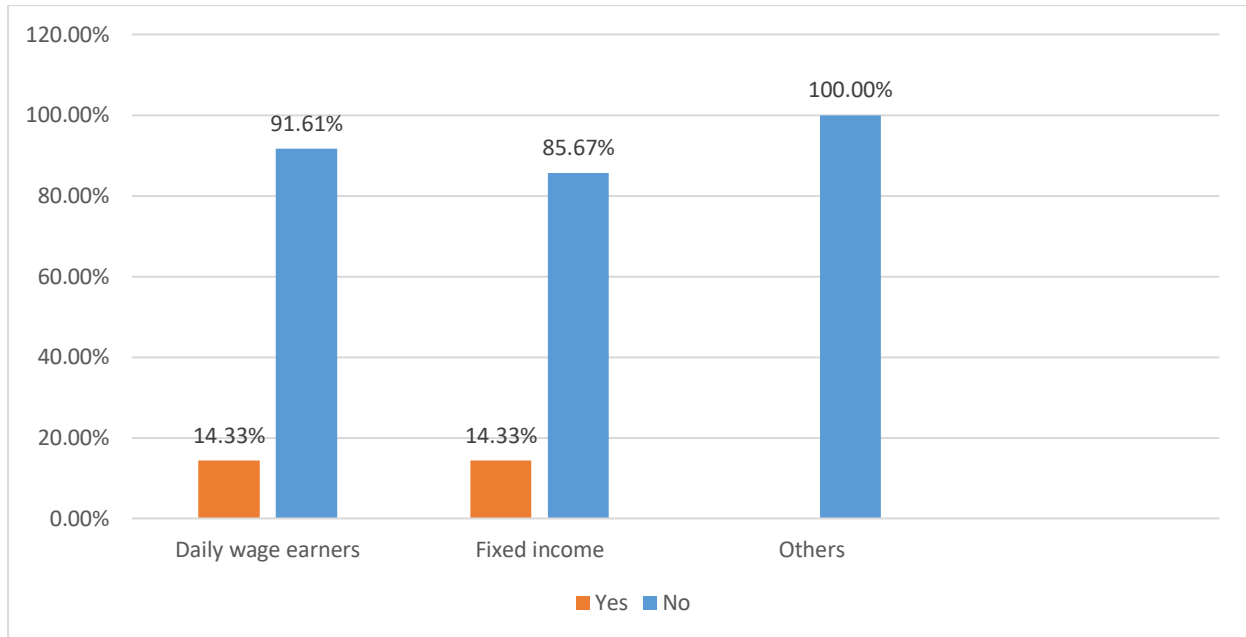


Figure 52: Beneficiaries of Direct Bank Transfers pre-Covid Kind of employment (2816 responses)

- A higher proportion, 14.33%, of workers (220 responses) who had fixed income jobs received DBT as compared to only 8.3% of daily wage earners (105 responses).

41.2 Direct Bank Transfers and pre-Covid Industry

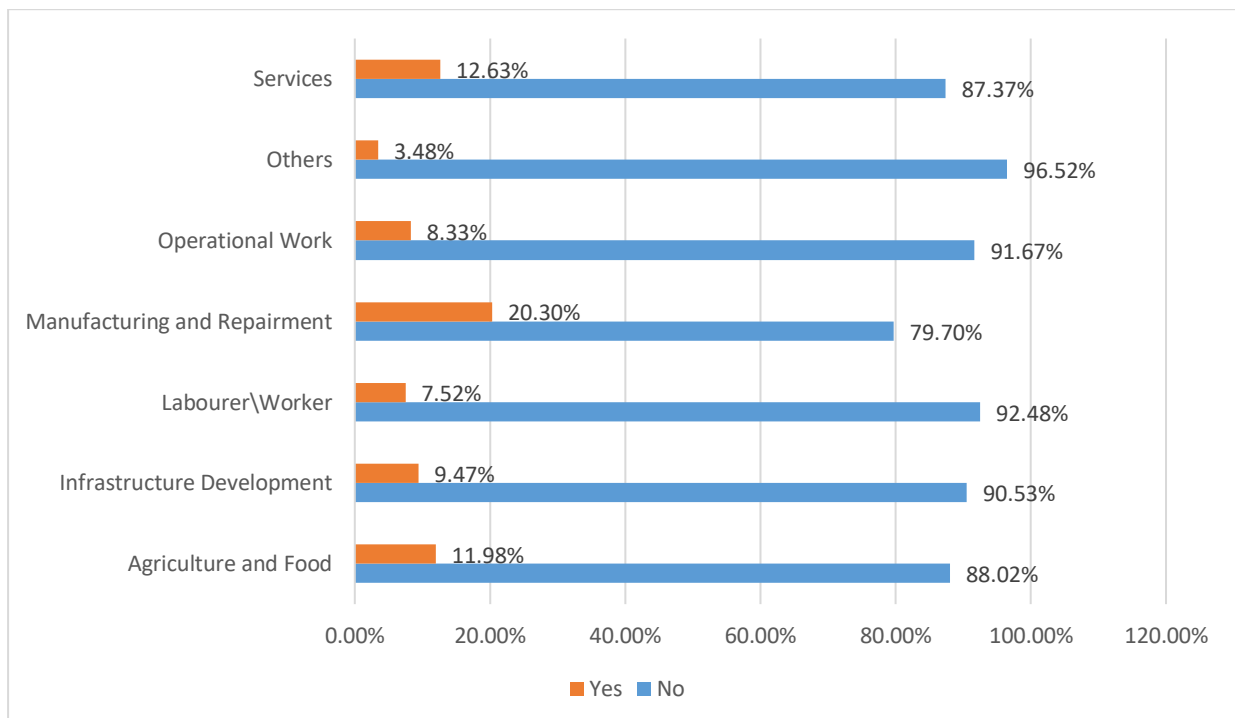


Figure 53: Direct Bank Transfers and pre-Covid Industry (2683 responses)

- Respondents who worked in Manufacturing Industry had the highest proportion of beneficiaries with around 20% (110 responses), followed by the Services industry, 12.63%. Labourer/Worker and Infrastructure Development were amongst the industry with the least proportion of DBT beneficiaries.

41.3 Access to bank accounts and Direct Bank Transfer

- Out of 2061 respondents who had bank accounts and answered this question, only 12.52% (258 responses) received direct benefit transfers in their bank accounts.

42. Support required for basic living

- Out of the 2834 respondents who responded to this question, 58.26% (1651 responses) stated that they needed some form of government support to continue their sustenance as compared to 41.74% (1183 responses) persons who stated that they did not need state support. This data shows that migrant workers face problems in day-to-day sustenance.

V. LABOUR LEGISLATIONS IN INDIA – NEED FOR REFORM

Labour laws of a country play a critical role in protecting the rights and interests of its workers. In the face of Covid pandemic, the Indian labour law regime failed to provide protection to its migrant workers.

A sudden nationwide lockdown of March 2020 rendered the migrant workers unemployed overnight. The workers were stopped from moving to their hometowns/villages.³¹ Stranded in the host state, unemployed, and with no means to avail necessities such as food, shelter, transport, etc. these workers began a mass exodus by whatever means possible, including on foot, to reach their homes.³²

In the past, the existing labour laws have been critiqued on several occasions for being complex and archaic, with inconsistencies in the provisions.³³ The most prominent recommendation for labour law reforms came from the Second National Commission on Labour (2002), where an overhaul was suggested to improve the framework for better compliance and uniformity.³⁴ Further, in 2019, the Ministry of Labour and Employment initiated major labour law reforms by introducing four Bills to consolidate 29 central laws, namely, the Code of Wages, the Industrial Relations Code (2020), the Social Security Code (2020), and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Condition Code (2020). These codes aim to simplify and modernise labour regulations which are often attributed as a reason for delayed compliances.

According to National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS) data, 90% of the 400 million workers employed in India are categorized as informal workers since these workers do not enjoy social or employment security.³⁵ The blue-collar migrant worker population in India forms a large part of this informal workforce without adequate social security protections. Over the years, efforts have been made to protect such migrant workers by bringing them within the ambit of applicable legislations. However, due to the highly mobile and informal work environment, any efforts in the direction of an effective framework have been futile.³⁶ Resultantly, these migrant workers continue to remain outside the purview of extant labour legislations both in their home state and host state. The Covid-19 induced migrant labour crisis is a consequence of the legal gap that exists in this regard.

In this chapter of the report, we evaluate the implementation of protections offered by the labour laws applicable to the respondent migrant workers during the pandemic. To this end, we assess the implementation of provisions of various labour law legislations as against the findings set out in this report. From our analysis, we conclude that the labour law framework, to the extent applicable to migrant workers, is inadequate and fails to provide substantive protection to migrant workers.

Even though there are provisions that would have assisted in alleviating the difficulties faced by the migrant workers, their implementation is minimal due to a lack of oversight by the governmental authorities. Moreover, the findings indicate that the overlapping problems of caste and gender-based discrimination exacerbate the vulnerabilities faced by migrant workers. It must be noted that none of the existing labour legislations in India deal with the issue of inequalities faced by migrant workers on account of their caste or access to education directly, which has also been covered in the later parts of this chapter.

For convenience and meaningful delivery, this chapter is divided into two parts: Part A and Part B.

³¹ S. Irudaya Rajan, P.Sivakumar & Aditya Srinivasan, The COVID-19 Pandemic and Internal Migration in India: A 'Crisis of Mobility', 63 The Indian Journal of Labour Economics, 1021-1039 (2020), available at <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s41027-020-00293-8>, last seen on 14/04/2021.

³² Ibid.

³³ The Industrial Relations Code, 2020, PRS Legislative Research, available at <https://prsindia.org/billtrack/the-industrial-relations-code-2020>, last seen on 20/04/2021.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Report on Conditions of Work and Promotion of Livelihoods in the Unorganised Sector, National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector, available at https://msme.gov.in/sites/default/files/Condition_of_workers_sep_2007.pdf, last seen on 20/06/2021.

³⁶ Road map for developing a policy framework for the inclusion of internal migrant workers in India, International Labour Organization, available at https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-new_delhi/documents/publication/wcms_763352.pdf, last seen on 20/06/2021.

- (i) Part A places the primary findings of this report in context of Indian labour law regime. The aim here is to assess the degree of implementation and corresponding efficiency of the existing labour legislations as supported by our findings. This Part also highlights the non-observance of various initiatives taken at the central and state level towards diminishing the plight of the migrant workers.
- (ii) Part B establishes the need to enact more inclusive and dynamic labour legislations by highlighting important yet neglected issues pertinent to the growth and overall well-being of the migrant workers

A. EVALUATING EXISTING LABOUR LAW FRAMEWORK VIS-A-VIS MIGRANT WORKERS³⁷

I. NON-PAYMENT OF MINIMUM WAGES

In India, since the Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions, 2020 (“**Occupational Safety Code**”) have not yet been notified, the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 (“**ISMW Act**”) regulates the employment of migrant workers and provides for their conditions of service. The ISMW Act applies to every establishment where five or more inter-state migrant workmen have been employed by a contractor.³⁸ Chapter 5 of the ISMW Act specifically deals with wages, welfare, and other facilities for inter-state migrant workmen. As per Section 13 of the ISMW Act, the wage rates, holidays, hours of work, and condition of service have to be similar for all workers performing the same work in an establishment.³⁹ The wages would be as prescribed by the appropriate government.⁴⁰

An important feature here is the proviso to section 13(1)(b) of the Act, which lays down mandatory payment to inter-state migrant workmen as per wages fixed under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 (“**MWA**”). Section 17 of the ISMW Act further fixes the responsibility of payment of wages on the contractor, principal employer, or any other nominated representative, as the case may be. Additionally, the Supreme Court of India has ruled⁴¹ that “if amenities for the benefit of the workmen employed in an establishment is not provided by the contractor, the obligation to provide such amenity rests on the principal employer.” It was observed here that non-compliance with the ISMW and its Rules amounts to a violation of right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.⁴²

However, during the pandemic, the migrant workers were not only denied minimum wages but they were also denied their earned wages and faced wage theft.⁴³ There have also been various reports which have highlighted that a large proportion of migrant workers were not paid at all by their employers despite their vulnerable economic position.⁴⁴ Wage authorities could have easily addressed this issue if the contractors had maintained passbooks as per Section 12(b) of ISMW Act. It is pertinent to note that unfortunately, the Social Security Code repeals this section without a corresponding replacement. Most migrant workers hence have no formal evidence of their employment relationship, making it tougher to claim wage security and tenure.

As per the MWA, the state governments are empowered to fix the minimum rates of wages payable to employees employed in scheduled employment categories.⁴⁵ In our findings, most respondents arrived in Madhya Pradesh from Maharashtra. For unskilled workers, the Maharashtra government has fixed

³⁷ This part focusses on the labor law legislations in force during the time the data vis-à-vis migrant workers was collected. The Acts discussed in this part have been merged under the Code on Social Security Code, 2020, the Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions, 2020 and were adopted on 28th September 2020. The new codes are yet to be notified.

³⁸ S. 1(4), The Inter-state Migrant Workmen Act, 1979.

³⁹ S. 13(1)(a), The Inter-state Migrant Workmen Act, 1979.

⁴⁰ S. 13(1)(b), The Inter-state Migrant Workmen Act, 1979.

⁴¹ People’s Union for Democratic Rights v. Union of India, (1982) 3 SCC 235, 238.

⁴² Ibid, at 252.

⁴³ Stranded Workers Action Network, 21 Days and Counting: COVID-19 Lockdown, Migrant Workers, and the Inadequacy of Welfare Measures in India, 9, Azim Premji Foundation available at http://publications.azimpremji foundation.org/2272/1/lockdown_and_distress_report_by_stranded_workers_action_network-2.pdf?fbclid=IwAR03y0EUdGqwjOCjImKcX_1ChtwG1EdLVSDtrQAEEDKYhTulooWGUDOA8, last seen on 31/07/2021.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ S. 3(1)(a), Minimum Wages Act, 1948.

the minimum wage payable to workers at Rs. 381.54 per day.⁴⁶ However, as set out by the report, approximately 42% of the respondents received wages at rates lower than Rs. 350 per day. Even after settling in M.P., out of the 1209 respondents who were employed at the time of the survey, around 37% of the respondents received wages at rates lower than minimum wages fixed for unskilled workers. This violation has been happening even though courts have held non-payment of minimum wages as "*unconscionable and unpardonable*".⁴⁷ Evidently, the obligation of the contractors and principal employer to pay minimum wages to migrant workers has witnessed substantial non-compliance. Further, it illustrates that the state governments have also failed to check such non-compliance with minimum wages.

II. LACK OF ASSISTANCE DURING TRAVEL

Section 14 of the ISMW Act entitles a workman under the said Act to a displacement allowance, which shall either be fifty percent of her monthly wages or seventy-five rupees (whichever is higher).⁴⁸ The workman must also be paid a journey allowance by the contractor under the Act for both outward and return journeys.⁴⁹

Contractors are also required to pay the return fares from the place of employment to the residential place when employment is terminated before the stipulated date even where the workman has to cease her work through no fault of her own or had to resign because of non-fulfilment of conditions given under the Act.⁵⁰

The contractor, under Rule 24 of Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Central Rules, 1980 ("**ISMW Rules**") is required to keep a record of return of the migrant workmen and report the same to the specified authorities.⁵¹

However, this provision has been largely ignored and the migrants received little to no support in this aspect. In our findings, as many as 37% of the respondents stated that they had to purchase travel tickets from their own pockets causing a significant dent in their savings, a problem that could have been avoided if a journey allowance was provided.

Under the ISMW Act, housing of a migrant workman is the responsibility of the contractor.⁵² Many migrants had faced eviction during and after the lockdown due to their inability to pay rent, hence indicating the breach of contractors in fulfilling statutory obligations.⁵³ Despite the relevance of such obligations, the Social Security Code omits placing a similar obligation for housing migrant workers.

III. LIMITATIONS OF APPLICABLE LEGISLATIONS

Section 2(e) of the ISMW Act defines inter-state migrant workers as those recruited by contractors alone. This narrow interpretation of the term "inter-state migrant workers" excludes a large number of workers from its benefits who migrate on their own without the assistance of a contractor. The Occupational Safety Code has expanded the definition of "inter-state migrant worker" to include self-employed migrant workers and workers migrating independently and provides an option to the migrant and other unorganised workers to register themselves on a portal.⁵⁴ The Central Government has also initiated the process for creating such a portal. However, the creation of an online portal requiring registration may not be a viable solution for the target population, which often faces non-accessibility of smartphones and the internet.

⁴⁶The Maharashtra Minimum Wages VDA Notification wef January 2021 - The Minimum Wages Act, 1948, L K Nakashe, available at <https://lknconsultants.net/knowledge-centre/minimum-wages-slabs/The-Maharashtra-Minimum-Wages-VDA-Notification-wef-January-2021>, last seen on 31/07/2021

⁴⁷ Central Secretariat Club vs. Geetam Singh, MANU/DE/3445/2017.

⁴⁸ Section 14(1), The Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979.

⁴⁹ Section 15, The Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979.

⁵⁰ Rule 22, The Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Central Rules, 1980.

⁵¹ Rule 24, The Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Central Rules, 1980.

⁵² Section 16(d), The Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979.

⁵³ Evicted By Landlords, 48 Migrants Walk From Haryana To MP On Foot, 1 Woman Gives Birth On Road, India Times (16/05/2020), available at <https://www.indiatimes.com/news/india/48-labourers-evicted-by-landlords-take-long-walk-to-mp-from-haryana-one-woman-delivers-baby-on-roadside-513373.html>, last seen on 31/07/2021

⁵⁴ Section 2(zf), Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions, 2020.

Accessing the online portal would require not only a smartphone but also ancillary facilities such as mobile network, an active data pack, digital literacy, and the ability to understand the portal's language. As indicated by our study, only half of the respondents surveyed (around 50.48%) even possessed smartphones. The introduction of an additional online portal seems futile in light of the glaring digital divide plaguing migrant workers.

Further, as established by the report, the migrant workers are largely engaged in the informal sector. Therefore, some labour laws regulating the informal sector, to an extent, are still applicable to them. These labour legislations are the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 ("**UWSS Act**") at the central level, and the M.P. Unorganized Workers Welfare Act, 2003 ("**MUWW Act**") specifically for the state of Madhya Pradesh.

However, in the absence of a stable place of work and frequent movement between different states involved, the migrant workers form a special class of informal workers which limits the applicability of these welfare laws on them. For instance, the MUWW Act was enacted to provide a Welfare Fund for the unorganised workers of rural and urban areas of the state of Madhya Pradesh. It is limited in its scope to unorganised workers residing in M.P. To elaborate, the MUWW Act broadly defines "unorganized workers" which can include migrant workers,⁵⁵ but the social security benefits under the Act are restricted only to 'members of the Welfare Board'.⁵⁶ Since the members are those workers who reside for at least 12 months in an area in M.P., the migrant workers travelling to other states for a large part of the year are automatically disentitled from the benefits of the act.

Further, many unorganised workers schemes demand proof of residence within the state. Collecting and presenting such proof may be an onerous requirement for migrant workers, including those staying longer than 12 months.⁵⁷ In conclusion, the migrant workers who originally hailed from Madhya Pradesh, and are working in other states like Maharashtra, cannot avail the benefits under the MUWW Act in its current form.

Another important legislation covering building workers (constituting large proportion of the migrant workmen population) is the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 ("**BOCW**"). As per Section 12 of the BOCW, a building worker can register as a beneficiary if she has completed eighteen years of age and is engaged in construction work for not less than ninety days during the preceding twelve months.⁵⁸ Rule 277 of the Madhya Pradesh Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Rules, 2002 ("**BOCW Rules**") confers benefits of pension, housing, marriage and medical assistance, and assistance in case of death to building workers. The criteria stipulated under the BOCW Act does not confine itself to a particular region and therefore, migrant workers engaged in construction work anywhere in the country are entitled to benefits under the Act. Similarly, Maharashtra also has a host of schemes providing social security to construction workers registered under the Act. These include monetary payments to beneficiaries in the form of educational assistance, medical assistance and assistance in case of death. On the downside, there remains confusion as to which State Welfare Board will be responsible to provide benefits to the beneficiaries.

IV. LACK OF FOOD SECURITY

The pandemic-induced lockdown made it difficult for migrant workers and their families to ensure access to food grains. In response, the Central Government announced the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) providing an additional ration of 5 kg of wheat or rice per person and one kilogram of pulses per household every month free of cost to 80 crore ration cardholders.⁵⁹ While this scheme was laudable, its impact was limited to migrant workers who possessed ration cards. In our findings, 37% of the respondents did not possess ration cards and could not avail the benefits of the PMGKAY scheme. Still, the Madhya Pradesh government made efforts towards ensuring food security

⁵⁵ Section 2(r), M.P. Unorganized Workers Welfare Act, 2003.

⁵⁶ Section 7(2) and Section 13, M.P. Unorganized Workers Welfare Act, 2003.

⁵⁷ Aajeevika Bureau, Unlocking the Urban: Reimagining Migrant Lives in Cities Post-COVID 19, p. 62-63, APRIL 2020, Available at <https://www.aajeevika.org/assets/pdfs/Unlocking%20the%20Urban.pdf> last seen on 22/06/2021.

⁵⁸ Section 12, Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996.

⁵⁹ Barkha Mathur, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana To Provide Free Rations During Coronavirus Lockdown Extended, What Does It Mean For People On The Ground?, (14/07/2020) <https://swachhindia.ndtv.com/pradhan-mantri-garib-kalyan-anna-yojana-to-provide-free-rations-during-coronavirus-lockdown-extended-what-does-it-mean-for-people-on-the-ground-46691/>, last seen on 22/06/2021.

to migrant workers not possessing ration cards.⁶⁰ To understand how the migrant workers without a ration card could have procured ration, our team had filed an Right to Information query. We were informed that even if one member of a family had access to a ration card or Aadhar card, the family was eligible to avail the ration after their biometric verification.

V. LACK OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

The UWSS Act directs⁶¹ the Central Government to form schemes for the unorganised workers on matters relating to life and disability cover, health and maternity benefits, old age protection, and any other benefit as may be determined by the state government.⁶² These benefits aim to provide a minimum level of social security to workers in the unorganised sector. The benefits such as provident fund, employment injury benefit, housing, educational schemes for children, skill development of workers, funeral assistance, and old age homes are mandated for unorganised workers by the Central Government.⁶³ However, these schemes under the Act still demand adequate attention in the fulfilment of providing social security cover.

Responding to the plight of the migrant workers, the Madhya Pradesh government announced a scheme to provide Rs. 1000 to the migrant workers.⁶⁴ However, as per our findings, only around 11.5% (327 responses) of the respondents received direct benefit transfer. There may be several reasons for such ineffective implementation of welfare schemes which include- i) lack of data availability on migrant workers, ii) lack of political and administrative will, iii) articulation of schemes as benefits as opposed to legally enforceable rights, iv) tedious and complex process for registration of workers (which requires a lot of state government resources and manpower).

Even though electronic cash transfers are a useful measure to directly transfer amounts, but they may not be practically viable owing to inaccessibility of bank account and digital resources⁶⁵.

Hence, it is unlikely that migrant workers can access these benefits as they fall in an administrative blind spot, wherein they neither have information on these schemes nor the necessary documents to avail them.

Besides the direct benefit transfer, the Central government also requested states to utilize cess funds to towards welfare of construction workers. However, the outreach of these benefits demanded mandatory registration from the end of government.⁶⁶ Such registration depended heavily on documentation providing valid proof of residence, identification and other details. Migrant workers, who are constantly on the move, found it difficult to produce the requisite documents.

Additionally, these cess funds allocated towards welfare of construction workers amounted to approximately Rs. 49,625 Crores, but only less than Rs. 20,000 has been utilised.⁶⁷ Even in M.P., the amount of cess fund utilised was half of the total cess fund collected.⁶⁸ This shows that there were several sources of funds to provide social security to migrant workers but the utilisation was paltry.

⁶⁰ Mukesh Dubey, Rupees One thousand will be given to each labourer stranded in other states: CM Shri Chouhan (15/04/2020), available at https://prsindia.org/files/covid19/notifications/4106.MP_Financial_assistance_labor_Apr15.pdf, last seen on 10/05/2021.

⁶¹ Section 3(1), Unorganised Workers Social Security, 2008.

⁶² Section 3(4), Unorganised Workers Social Security, 2008.

⁶³ Animesh Upadhyay & Shashank Pandey, Labour Laws and Migrant Workers during COVID-19, The SCC Online, available at <https://www.scconline.com/blog/post/2020/04/15/labour-laws-and-migrant-workers-during-covid-19/>, last seen on 01/04/2021

⁶⁴ Supra at 61.

⁶⁵ M.P. Praveen, *Migrant workers without smart phones left in the lurch*, The Hindu (28/04/2020), available at <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/migrant-workers-without-smart-phones-left-in-the-lurch/article31455463.ece>, last seen on 13/03/2021. The news report also stated that, “a survey conducted by the Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development (CMID) found that while 51.6% migrants in Ernakulam have smartphones, 46% used basic feature phones and 2.3% have no access to mobile phones’.

⁶⁶ Surya Sarathi Ray, *Centre asks states to use cess to give money to workers to help them tide over COVID19 turbulence*, Financial Express (25/03/2020), available at <https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/centre-asks-states-to-use-cess-to-give-money-to-workers-to-help-them-tide-over-covid19-turbulence/1908473/>, last seen on 13/03/2021.

⁶⁷ Statement by Minister of State (IC) for Labour and Employment, *Answer to Welfare of Construction Workers*, Lok Sabha available at <http://164.100.24.220/loksabhaquestions/annex/171/AU278.pdf>, last visited on 20/04/2021.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

VI. LACK OF AVAILABILITY OF DATA WITH THE CENTRAL OR STATE GOVERNMENTS

A major hurdle in the implementation of labour legislations has been the lack of authentic data on migrant workers.⁶⁹ This aspect was highlighted by the Sixteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Labour as well.⁷⁰ Both the Census data and the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) data seem to be insufficient when it comes to understanding the intricate patterns of internal migration in the country.⁷¹ Consequently, State governments are not able to carry out their roles and responsibilities in providing relief to migrant workers.⁷²

In the past, the Delhi High court⁷³ has noted that: *"in order to have a proper, streamlined regulation of migrant workmen and their conditions of service, the first and the foremost significant measure would be the collection of the actual data and the integration of the same between the Central Government and the State Governments"*.

Recently, the Finance Minister Ms. Nirmala Sitharam had laid out her concerns on the fact that the government had no data to track millions of migrant workers who had moved back to their rural homes during the lockdown. Under Section 21, the Occupational Safety Code stipulates that the Central and state governments shall maintain a database of migrant workers on an online portal. In this regard, the central government has also started the work towards establishing such a portal and once codes are notified, this has the potential to have a uniform database.⁷⁴ This is a welcome step which requires further work in terms of contractors and employers facilitating data build-up in collaboration with the government.

However, leaving registration dependent on contractors and employers is not ideal given that they not only have no incentive to register workers but are also dis-incentivised as registration leaves them under the scrutiny of the labour department. Consequently, contractors then are liable to bear the labour costs (which they have currently been evading). An alternative to this issue could be registration of workers by local bodies and trade unions, civil society organisations. However, this also represents a grim situation on the legal framework when the mass exodus of migrant workers happened.

Under the ISMW Act, Section 12 prescribes that particulars concerning the hiring of migrant workmen are to be furnished to the specified authorities;⁷⁵ Had this provision been properly implemented, the government would have had accurate data on the internal migration of workmen during the COVID-19 pandemic. The efficacy of Section 12 has been diluted primarily because the contract workers are often shown as local workers to prevent compliance with the law in their respective host states.⁷⁶

State-level agencies that have been assigned to look after the implementation of this provision (such as Provident Fund Commissioners and Labour Commissioners) show little to no interest in fulfilling their duties to maintain active compliance.⁷⁷ Thus, the beneficial provisions under the Occupational Safety Code may also fall into disuse if active steps are not taken to ensure compliance.

⁶⁹ Shreehari Paliath, *A year after Covid-19 lockdown, India still doesn't have reliable data or policy on migrant workers*, Scroll.in, available at <https://scroll.in/article/990527/a-year-after-Covid-19-lockdown-india-still-doesnt-have-reliable-data-or-policy-on-migrant-workers>, last seen on 13/03/2021.

⁷⁰ Press-Release of Sixteenth Report of The Standing Committee on Labour, Lok Sabha, *Social Security and Welfare Measures for Inter-State Migrant Workers* (2020).

⁷¹ *Health and Safety of Interstate Migrant Workers in India during Covid-19: Inadequacy of the Labour Laws*, Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism, available at <https://grfdt.com/PublicationDetails.aspx?Type=Articles&TabId=10129>, last seen on 13/03/2021.

⁷² Akshatha Machina, *Lack of migrant worker data hits relief moves*, *The Economic Times* (02/04/2020), available at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/lack-of-migrant-worker-data-hits-relief-moves/articleshow/74943531.cms>, last seen on 13/03/2021; N.J. Nair, *Local bodies collecting data of migrant workers in Kerala*, *The Hindu* (11/04/2020), available at <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/local-bodies-collecting-data-of-migrant-workers-in-kerala/article31310706.ece>, last seen on 13/03/2021.

⁷³ Shashank S. Mangal v. Government Of NCT Of Delhi 2020 SCC OnLine Del 677.

⁷⁴ The Wire Staff, *Centre Moves to Create Migrant Worker Database, Could Be Ready by June 2021*, *The Wire*, available at <https://thewire.in/government/migrant-worker-database-centre-labour-ministry>, last seen on 21/06/2021.

⁷⁵ S. 12(1)(a), *The Inter-state Migrant Workmen Act, 1979*.

⁷⁶ K. Sarkar, *Blame this archaic 1979 law for Modi govt's lack of data on migrants' deaths*, *The Print* (23/09/2020), available at <https://theprint.in/opinion/blame-this-archaic-1979-law-for-modi-govts-lack-of-data-on-migrants-deaths/508536/>, last seen on 13/03/2021; See, A. Ferus-Comelo, *Migration and Precariousness: Two Sides of the Contract Labour Coin*, 49 *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39, 42 (2014).

⁷⁷ *Ibid*.

A solution to maintain a national registry or database on migrant workers has been recommended by a Parliamentary Standing Committee Report⁷⁸ and NITI Aayog's draft policy on migrant workers.⁷⁹ This database can include details regarding their migration, previous employment, nature of skills, etc and can help in rolling out effective policies.

VII. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Recognizing the difficulties faced by migrant workers even after reaching their home state, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India vide its order dated 9th June 2020 directed the state governments to set up counselling centres at the block level and the district level.⁸⁰ This order mandated the state governments to provide all information regarding government schemes and other avenues of employment to these workers so they may be utilised as a state resource.⁸¹ However, based on our findings, it can be concluded that the directions were not effectively implemented.

Around 87% of the respondents said that they were never contacted by any state authority or government representative in relation to any possible employment opportunities. Even though the M.P. state government had announced the 'Rozgar Setu' Portal for providing employment opportunities to migrant worker, 56% of the respondents in our findings are currently unemployed. Therefore, other than the lack of interest shown by private players for the scheme,⁸² the scheme appears to not been very successful at providing employment opportunities to migrant workers.

Gender and employment opportunities

Our findings are also supported by those from a study conducted by Azim Premji University. In their survey of 4,000 people across 12 states, it was found that two-thirds (67%) of the workers they surveyed reported having lost their employment. Across states, the share of women reporting job losses was greater than that of men.⁸³

Renowned economist Ashwini Deshpande warns that there could be a longer impact on women due to the lockdown, since the share of their childcare responsibilities would increase as schools continue to shut down.⁸⁴ In another study of 176 female workers in the informal sectors in Delhi, Shinee Chakraborty, a research analyst at the Institute of Social Studies Trust found that a majority of women reported a loss in income, but at the same time, 66% of the respondents reported an increase in unpaid work at home and 36% reported increased demands of a child and elder care. Only a quarter reported any help from their spouses in household chores.⁸⁵

⁷⁸ *Two Hundred Twenty Ninth Report On Management Of Covid-19 Pandemic And Related Issues*, Rajya Sabha, available at https://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/Committee_site/Committee_File/ReportFile/15/143/229_2021_2_15.pdf, last seen on 13/03/2021.

⁷⁹ Shreehari Paliath, *A year after Covid-19 lockdown, India still doesn't have reliable data or policy on migrant workers*, IndiaSpend, available at <https://scroll.in/article/990527/a-year-after-Covid-19-lockdown-india-still-doesnt-have-reliable-data-or-policy-on-migrant-workers>, last seen on 13/03/2021.

⁸⁰ Supra at 16.

⁸¹ Ibid

⁸² Ranjan, Madhya Pradesh Government, Employment initiative for migrant workers falls flat, private players show little interest, Hindustan Times (23/07/2020), available at, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/madhya-pradesh-govt-s-employment-initiative-for-migrant-workers-falls-flat-private-players-show-little-interest/story-B86DwuUS7kWyHVM9xwXuK.html>, last seen on 16/04/2021.

⁸³ Rukmini S, How Covid-19 locked out women from jobs, Live mint (11/06/2020) available at <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/how-covid-19-locked-out-women-from-jobs-11591772350206.html>, last seen on 13/03/2021.

⁸⁴ Ashwini Deshpande, professor of economics at Ashoka University, looked at national-level panel data from Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE)'s Consumer Pyramids Household Survey (CPHS) database for a discussion paper published on the University's website. As cited in Rukmini S, How Covid-19 locked out women from jobs, Live mint (11/06/2020) available at <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/how-covid-19-locked-out-women-from-jobs-11591772350206.html>, last seen on 13/03/2021.

⁸⁵ Rukmini S, *How covid-19 locked out women from jobs*, Live mint (11/06/2020) available at <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/how-covid-19-locked-out-women-from-jobs-11591772350206.html>, last seen on 13/03/2021.

Women and Dalits suffered the greatest declines in employment in April

Decline in employment (%) in the first full month of lockdown in India



Fig 54: Decline in employment in April 2020

The gendered impact of the pandemic would also have consequences for reverse migration and gender gap increase. One such study notes:

*"The reverse migration can alter the dynamics of development and reset migration equations for women. The soon-to-be anticipated unprecedented global economic depression will result in the feminization of loss of jobs and widen gender gaps to an exacerbated level."*⁸⁶

In a study focussing on impact of Covid on women,⁸⁷ some themes that emerged from the women's experiences were "loss of livelihood and increase indebtedness compromises (women are expected and required to compromise more on the basic necessities including food and also on their sanitary needs),⁸⁸ "anxiety concerning the virus" and, "captivity and the burden of responsibility".⁸⁹

⁸⁶ S. Irudaya Rajan, P. Sivakumar, & A. Srinivasan, *The COVID-19 Pandemic and Internal Labour Migration in India: A 'Crisis of Mobility'*, 63 Indian Journal of Labour Economics, 1, 4 (2020).

⁸⁷ Abdul Azeez, Dandub Palzor Negi, Asha Rani & Senthil Kumar, *The impact of COVID-19 on migrant women workers in India*, 62 Eurasian Geography and Economics, 93, 93-112 (2021).

⁸⁸ "This will have negative impacts on the health status of the most vulnerable population, especially children. Gender dynamics play a crucial role in compromises. Though the entire family is affected by the impoverishment caused, women are at the forefront in skipping meals, having a reduced quantity of food, and compromising their sanitary and hygienic needs". Ibid, at 107.

⁸⁹ The burden of responsibilities accompanied the necessity of living with limited resources. Sudden changes in routine and child-care required by social distancing were stressful for the women. Most women had to stay in their single rooms throughout the lockdown period with no or limited means of entertainment and recreation. However, men had comparatively better opportunities to go out of the house to meet household requirements, and some of them had smartphones which was the major source of entertainment. Ibid.

B. EVALUATING THE LACUNAE

The aforementioned Part-A illustrated the gaps in the implementation of the existing laws aimed at uplifting the conditions of the migrant workers. The present data reflects that around 8% of the total respondents surveyed were females. While the percentage may look nominal, the number of female responses (228) is substantial. These responses helped us understand how female migrant workers are discriminated against in different aspects when compared to their male counterparts. This segment enumerates the factors and highlights the conditions that have led to further marginalisation of a subset of female migrant workers amongst the class of migrant workers as a whole.

I. MENSTRUAL HYGIENE

Hygiene is one of the cornerstones for amelioration for groups marginalised across gender, caste, race, income group, ability, etc. The stark silence of the law-making process brought to the fore during the pandemic was the lack of any specific provision within the legislative and regulatory framework to facilitate the supply of sanitary pads to the migrant female workers.⁹⁰ This problem became even bigger at the beginning of lockdown when the government initially failed to include sanitary pads in the list of essential items leading to more crisis of its availability.⁹¹ Even though it was included in essential items later, it raises a question as to whether the administration has made themselves accountable for not providing the access to menstrual hygiene to their citizens.

In the past, several states such as Andhra Pradesh⁹² and Kerala⁹³ have actively taken responsibility in association with the state departments for education, women and child welfare to provide sanitary napkins to school and college attending women. However, in the aftermath of the pandemic, more concerted efforts are required at the end of the state government to ensure the menstrual hygiene of their citizens.

The pandemic saw many NGOs coming to the forefront to aid the female workers with cost-free sanitary pads but such individual efforts, as laudable they may be, cannot be a substitute for state action. Betterment of hygiene standards among female workers is not possible till the time the state government ensures it as part of the right to health under Article 21 of the Indian constitution pertaining to fundamental right to life and personal liberty.

As the report illustrates, almost 99% of the female worker population fell in the age-bracket of 15 to 54 years or the menstruating age for women. Some female migrant workers also complained of facing hardships during their travel on account of menstruation and further developing urinary tract infection because of the unhygienic conditions. This issue demands due redressal from government to provide access to pads and other alternatives to women, but more importantly to own the responsibility to ensure the right to health for all.

II. MATERNITY BENEFITS

The question of maternity benefits has significant impacts not only to the female migrant workers but also for the general nutrition and health concerns of their children and hereby upcoming generations. The collected data sample shows that the majority of female migrant workers population essentially comprises the population below the age of 50 years.

The biggest problem to cover women from the informal sector, where most of the migrant women are placed, is that Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 is restricted to women working in establishments.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Donita Jose, Period, An added worry for migrant women on the move, The New Indian Express (27/05/2020), available at <https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/telangana/2020/may/27/period-an-added-worry-for-migrant-women-on-the-move-2148440.html>, last seen on 16/04/2021.

⁹¹ Coronavirus sparks a sanitary pad crisis in India, BBC News (22/05/2020), available at <https://scroll.in/article/995284/covid-19-pandemic-has-demonstrated-that-menstrual-hygiene-is-a-multifaceted-challenge-in-india>, last seen on 6/08/2021.

⁹² Andhra govt to provide free sanitary napkins to girls, The New Indian Express (06/03/2021), available at <https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/andhra-pradesh/2021/mar/06/andhra-govt-to-provide-free-sanitary-napkins-to-girls-2272976.html>, last seen on 6/08/2021.

⁹³ Aastha Ahuja, In A First, Kerala Government Launches She Pad Scheme To Improve Menstrual Hygiene, NDTV (14/11/2017), available at <https://swachhindia.ndtv.com/first-kerala-government-launches-pad-scheme-improve-menstrual-hygiene-14573/> last seen on 6/08/2021.

⁹⁴ Dipa Sinha and Sudeshna Sengupta, How Maternity Benefits Can Be Extended to Informal Women Workers, (06/02/2019) available at <https://thewire.in/women/how-maternity-benefits-can-be-extended-to-informal-women-workers>, last seen on 13/03/2021.

Similar to its predecessor, the definition of ‘Establishment’ in the proposed Social Security Code, 2020 also does not include the unorganised sector. Hence, women engaged in the unorganised sector, despite being large in number, remain bereft of these benefits.

This means that women workers on farms, construction, home, etc. are outside the purview of the protection. Maternity benefit is indeed available under sectoral laws such as Section 22 of the BOCW Act.⁹⁵ However, this requires registration with the labour welfare boards. The lack of accessibility and sensitisation to enroll themselves in the cumbersome process for the benefit may often cause hindrance for women beneficiaries.

Despite the ruling by Supreme Court⁹⁶ which held that the female workers working on muster roll/ ad-hoc/contractual basis should be given all the benefits under the Act, the act still is exclusive for most of the informal sector. The court also highlighted that the Maternity Benefit Act is not merely for the benefit of regular women employees but also extends to women workers engaged on a casual basis and a muster roll on a daily wage basis.⁹⁷

However, this ruling has been ignored as the Social Security Code, 2020 does not make maternity benefit universal.

Suggested methods to provide maternity cover to women employed in informal sectors (a majority of whom are migrant workers) are:

- Universalisation of maternity entitlements: Maternity benefits towards the informal sector based on employer engagement needs to be encouraged by the government. In this method, the State steps in to provide a middle ground which can come as a subsidy or monetary support to the employer. This approach places greater responsibility on the State, as opposed to making employers the only source from which security can be granted.
- Multiple centres for beneficiaries: Female beneficiaries should be able to claim their rights through various state machinery such as Anganwadi centres, labour welfare boards and health departments. Additionally, these machineries could conduct regular sensitisation programs in collaboration with the employer to generate awareness amongst women regarding maternity benefits.⁹⁸

III. EDUCATION

The data emanating from the collected sample highlights another facet of reality which, despite being evident, has not found adequate legal safeguards yet. The data indicates that a higher level of education was accessible to male migrant workers as compared to their female counterparts. Every one in five females was uneducated as compared to one in sixteen males being uneducated. It is worthwhile to note that slightly more than 8% of the total female respondents did not even complete basic primary education. The lack of access to education was prominent amongst the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes community.

IV. KIND OF EMPLOYMENT

The kind of employment a worker engages in is directly proportionate to the relative quality of living. The study illustrated that 55% of the female migrant workers were employed as daily-wage earners as compared to 43% of the male migrant workers. Additionally, the proportion of male respondents earning fixed income was around 13% more than the female migrant workers. The findings indicate that an intelligible workforce gender-disparity prevails in terms of the kind of employment opportunities available to female migrant workers. This suggests that the female workers were more likely to be given daily wages than employment with a fixed income. The lack of accessibility of primary education for females could be an important factor in deciding their kind of employment.

To further understand the degree of woes plaguing the female migrant population, the report also analyses the pattern of industry engagement for the migrant workers. Across all industries, the share of male workers was higher than that of females, except for the Labour/Worker industry which is the most labour intensive and least paid for in the entire array of industries. The data reveals that around 36% of female workers were engaged in the Labour/Worker industry whereas only 8% of male workers were

⁹⁵ S. 22(g) of the Building and Other Construction Workers Act

⁹⁶ Municipal Corporation of Delhi v. Female Workers (Muster Roll) and Ors, AIR 2000 SC 1274

⁹⁷ Ibid, at 235

⁹⁸ Ibid

engaged in this industry. The proportion of female workers was not only substantially higher in the most labour-intensive industry but they were also more likely to be engaged as a daily wage earner.

V. GAPS IN INCOME GROUP

As indicated by the findings, the proportion of female workers below the average income groups is significantly higher at around 66% as compared to their male counterparts at around 40%. The data revealed that with an increase in the income levels, the proportion of female workers for the above-average income groups decreased drastically. This reflects that the gender disparity exists even in terms of the income groups of the respondents.

This disparity was further witnessed after the pandemic where the female respondents had a higher share of representation with around 70% in the average or below-average income groups than male respondents whose share was 56%. The data reveals that as we move towards the above average income groups, the share of female respondents decreases while the share of male respondents increases. This trend is similar to that observed in the pre-Covid times, where more female respondents were in the lower income groups.

VI. EMPLOYMENT SCHEME COVERAGE IN THE HOST STATE

The migrant workers, being one of the most vulnerable communities in India for a host of sociological and economic reasons, depend on various welfare schemes to a large extent for their subsistence. The collected sample data was eye-opening as it showed that out of 2860 responses, only 31 respondents were covered by employment schemes. Even in such a small pool of workers the abominable status of female workers was consistent as there was just 1 female beneficiary of such schemes.

The scenario has become worse in post-pandemic phase where all of the 41 scheme beneficiaries were male respondents suggesting no coverage to female beneficiaries.

VII. ACCESSIBILITY AND DIGITAL DIVIDE

Since only half of the male respondents and only one-fourth of female respondents had smartphones, the prevalent lack of ownership of smartphones could have acted as a barrier for online registration for the female respondents. This inaccessibility may be an indication of their dependency on the male members of their family for something as basic as registration.

VIII. POST COVID REALITY

Male respondents were more likely to return to their host state as compared to their female counterparts. This could be attributed to them earning more money and having more mobility than female workers. Post-Covid, 44% of males were employed as compared to only 33% of the females. Female respondents were more likely to be unemployed because pre-Covid female respondents were predominantly employed in labour-intensive industries, in low-paying income groups with daily wage jobs than fixed-income jobs; forming a substantial part of the class hit the worst due to the pandemic.

VI. MIGRANT STORIES: TRAGEDY AND HOPE INTERTWINED

The overall experience of working on this report has been overwhelming for each one of our team members. Whilst speaking to migrant workers, we came across several stories, some ghastly enough to shake us to the core and few others which instilled hope and faith in humanity, against all institutional apathy and ignorance.

We felt that these accounts give us a glimpse into the lives of migrant workers and their everyday struggles. These experiences cannot be fully understood by a study alone and for this reason, we share a few of them with our readers.

For the sake of safety and confidentiality, we have changed the names of the relevant parties related to the story.

1. A WORLD OF MESSIAH AND A DEVIL IN DISGUISE

Babloo is a married man who hails from the Other Backward Classes category. He used to stay in Bhopal before shifting to Pune for employment, with his family, comprising of his wife and two small children. His life was going smoothly and he used to earn a reasonable amount in his job at the waterproofing and painting industry in Pune.

In 2020, Babloo heard media reports regarding the lockdown and unemployment and his worst fears upon hearing these reports began to materialise. Very soon, the family's savings began depleting and they were stranded with bare minimum resources. Despite the family's growing emergency, Babloo had to wait until the government announced the special Shramik trains for migrant workers.

Hopeful for their return journey home, Babloo registered the family's names multiple times for the trains. Multiple attempts, however did not solve the problem as their names did not appear on the train list. Fear of Covid coupled with the apathy they were facing after he lost his job forced them to take the dreaded walk home to Madhya Pradesh from Pune- a distance of nearly 789 km.

Within a few hours of walking, their only food got over, and were forced to watch their young children cry in pain and hunger as they walked. Babloo informed us that their family was fortunate as a "Messiah" had provided the family with food for the way- he cites this as the reason he is alive to tell us their story. Babloo then found a traveller tempo for his wife and his children who, at a low cost, promised to get them home.. Relieved, Babloo soon found another vehicle to return home.

Once he got back, he found that his family were yet to reach home. As time passed, Babloo found himself in increasing worry- worry which did not dissipate when his family arrived home, with his wife in tears. Babloo learned that she had been molested by the driver and co-passengers inside the tempo. As he narrated his ordeal to us, we realised that he could no longer figure out whom to trust and felt utterly hopeless- a feeling shared by several others we have interviewed.



Photo 1: Thousands of families like Babloo's struggled to get back home during a pandemic

2. COVID 19: THE AGGRAVATING SOCIAL DIVIDE

In the village of Pachokhar which falls in Tehsil- Mangawan of District- Rewa, Madhya Pradesh lives Shyam, who is a migrant worker, belonging to the OBC category. Shyam used to have a very busy day in a district of Maharashtra wherein, before lockdown, he used to drive someone's car for OLA and Uber and was paid around 350-400 per day, depending on the number of daily rides. The sole breadwinner of his family, he recounted the caste discrimination he has to face in his village upon his return post the lockdown. The Pachokhar village panchayat, we were told, is dominated by members belonging to the Brahmin community. A majority of the schemes and subsidies of the government hardly reach backward and scheduled castes and tribes, whilst the upper caste dominated Panchayat have taken advantage of almost every scheme announced for the villages.

Shyam tells us that Devi, a Scheduled Caste woman, has a broken roof above her head for years which gets breaks down further every monsoon and the leakage fills their houses on a regular basis. Pachokhar village, which gets funds under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna almost every year, now has its Brahmin leader having four pucca houses. The Government of MP announces schemes for cow breeding which the backward castes are not even aware of, while the same scheme provides benefits to almost every upper caste household having more access to resources..

Given his status as an OBC person, Shyam had once reached out to the Panchayat Secretary to create documents for availing schemes. This request was met with brazen demands for bribes if Shyam's request (for sending these documents to higher authorities) was to be met.

Shyam tells us that he misses his time in Maharashtra but also has the small relief of being with his family. As we spoke to him, we gauged that whilst he was scared of speaking about the caste discrimination, he still had some faith that perhaps one day, things in his village and life could change for the better. He is also very delighted to know that someone called him to know of his employability after months. Even when he doesn't have the resources to make his future bright, he definitely had a bright smile that someone cared enough to listen to his story.

3. STRENGTH WHEN ALL HOPE IS LOST: LAXMI'S TALE

On the 24th of March, 2020, amidst rising panic and rates of COVID-19, the news was broken to the nation, an evening prior to what was to come, that the country would go into a near total lockdown. The lockdown shut off nearly all rail and road transport. In the midst of pandemic induced panic and worries over the lockdown, Laxmi Gundiya had fears that were more pressing- the lockdown would cut down her

daily wage and effectively strand her, a pregnant migrant worker, in a hostile urban space far from her home in Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh with little resources.



Photo 2: Thousands of pregnant migrants had to walk a considerable distance due to lack of transporational facilities

After a few weeks of clinging onto hope for a meagre wage and food, Laxmi knew she had to reach home- she was pregnant and it would no longer be wise to wait and risk her unborn child. Constraints in accessing help and support from the government and civil society left her with one choice- walking a gruelling 150 kms along with buses whenever possible. Indeed, she was left unaided by all. Her problems, combined with the oppressive social structures against a Scheduled Tribe woman such as her, should have ideally merited great support- something that she was vaguely hopeful for once she would be at home. Instead, what did welcome her was further apathy and indifference. She was given no ration at all and the government left her to deal with her hardships alone. By the time our volunteers reached out to her for the first time, her hardships had culminated in a miscarriage and utter loss of hope. Unfortunately, after this ordeal, Laxmi refused to speak to any of our volunteers who wished to assist her further. Instead, volunteers were informed by a colleague that Laxmi was now working as a daily wage construction worker and, in spite of follow ups, did not wish to talk any longer. That Laxmi secured herself a job in Gujarat as a construction worker and works hard to make ends meet might seem unusual to many. However, a seemingly unusual act such as this was all but the best possible option for an ST woman in her circumstances.

4. A STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL FOR EVERY COMMON MAN

Manish Kumar Sahu might possibly fit the profile of a common man- he works hard every day, on the good and the bad ones, just to get by each day with proper meals. His efforts for his family and survival are, however, anything but ordinary.

A native of Rewa, Manish is a Bahunjan man, working as both farmer and labourer to earn wages amounting to around 300 rupees daily- just enough to feed his family. As a doting father, this does not stop him from wanting better for his children, who are at the age to begin schooling. Manish is worried about this because of his clear lack of money.

As our volunteers made note of this, Manish continued with another allaying concern- he and his wife are in need of medical help, which requires them to go for regular check-ups and possibly even an operation. When asked further about the couple's health issues, all Manish could tell us was that his wife could often not be physically functional on many days, owing possibly to over exhaustion or the lack of proper nutrition.



Photo 3: With no access to employment, migrants are finding it difficult to maintain their wellbeing

Indeed, as we soon learned, Manish himself had not been able to access enough medical help to understand the particulars of their health properly. All he knew was that the lethargy and pain made daily functioning an uphill task. His job being an informal (and underpaid) one, he sometimes goes without work which becomes a massive issue in his household as it sustains on his daily wages. Manish tells us that if he is without a job even for a week, it becomes difficult to feed his family, forget education and health.

When asked if he owned a ration card, he told us that he was refused one by the Sarpanch who said that he could instead get the benefits from the Gareeb Yojana. Unsurprisingly, he had not received any of the benefits promised under the Yojana. This is an experience that is not unique to Manish- indeed, there has been little effort to help migrant workers to understand what social security they can and cannot avail of, forcing many such as Manish to run from pillar to post for basic needs.

5. A MOTHER'S FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

Sonali Dhote was married when she was 25. Now a 31 year old woman from Betul, and a mother to a four year old, she recounted to our interviewer, situations that are typically faced by Bahujan women as herself.

As was prevalent in 2020, her husband (who was engaged in a blue collar job in Maharashtra earlier) lost his job in the wake of the pandemic. Unable to survive in the city without a job, and worried for their safety, they were forced to travel back home. Back in Betul, Sonali, her husband, and their child live with her parents since her in-laws do not have the resources to support them. Without a job and living with elderly parents, Sonali is worried about her child's education and their family's future.



Photo 4: With parents being unemployed, millions of children of migrants have dropped out of school

As a woman, being tasked disproportionately with caregiving has always been the (patriarchal) norm. Sonali is a graduate who has been living as a homemaker all this while. Under these circumstances, she has become desperate for a job that can provide them some stability. Sonali's story is yet another reminder of how women's experiences of the pandemic reveal the inherent inequality perpetuated in our socio-legal system. As a Bahujan family, they have no land of their own and are struggling to pay for rent and other essentials. Already tasked with looking after children, taking care of the elderly, and performing daily household chores, Sonali now also has to worry about generating a steady source of income. The story of Sonali, and women like her, is particularly important because it attests to the intersectional nature of the struggles and discrimination faced by women from marginalised castes.

6. AN ENDLESS WAIT FOR BETTER TIMES

27 year old Lalit Dharmare was compelled to return home from work in Maharashtra when the pandemic struck. His hardship is yet another textbook example of the vulnerable position that Bahujans are placed in, and how the lockdown affected them first (and the worst).

Thus, when lockdown was announced, Lalit, and hundreds like him, faced real fears about their future. In the absence of any assistance from his employers or the host government, Lalit had to make his own arrangements to go back home. He could cover part of the distance by bus - for the remainder, however, he was forced to take the arduous walk home to Betul. Like several other migrant workers across the country, Lalit walked for 18 hours to reach his hometown even as he battled limited access to food on the journey and other and existing lockdown restrictions (that did not take into account the needs of migrant workers).

Once home, Lalit did not get the respite he had hoped for. To begin with, he found that no provisions were in place for incoming migrants who would need to be quarantined, tested, and receive medical attention. Instead, he had to make his way to the hospital alone, only to see that there was no one to note down details of his travel, his health, or inform him about the medical procedures and protocol in place. Further, as part of the Madhya Pradesh state government's scheme, Lalit had been assured that migrant worker affected by the pandemic would receive a cash deposit of Rs. 1000 for immediate relief. Months later, on a call with our volunteers, Lalit tells us that he is yet to receive this money.



Photo 5: Several migrant workers had to travel back to home state with all their belongings

The state of apathy in his hometown and the complete indifference of the Madhya Pradesh government has left Lalit helpless. He is waiting to go back to Maharashtra (to be able to earn his wage again) as he has given up hope of any assistance from the government. As a member of a backward caste, Lalit's story of hardship is testament to the systemic neglect that has left thousands of poor migrant workers disillusioned with the state of governance in the country.

7. UNSPEAKABLE STRUGGLES – TO LIVE AND EAT

Mohini Sharma lives in a small village in the district of Morena. The youngest girl in her family, her father and her family are involved in *mazdoori* (labourers), and their income, despite its meagreness, supported Mohini's college education in Morena. Lockdown, however, upset this (carefully managed) balance heavily.

With COVID-19 restrictions, the family soon lost their jobs one after the other, and in turn, the source of income that funded Mohini's education. This was the position when we first contacted Mohini and her family. Mohini could not afford to continue her education and the entire family were desperate to help her continue it. Upon verifying her story, and through crowdfunding, we had managed to collect enough funds to pay for college fees for her second year and had considered it as a resolved situation.

A few weeks later, however, Mohini contacted us again. She told us, not only with desperation, but also with a grit to access help anyhow, that her problems were far from over. At present, Mohini and her family are not getting enough food to sustain themselves- they were running out of savings, and food was unavailable despite having a ration card. To add on to that, she is also faced with thyroid problems and requires medical intervention. When asked about her Ayushman Bharat card, she let us know that she was unable to avail the benefits of the card, given a near total lack of help provided by public hospitals in availing the benefit. Further, the nearest hospital was situated a great distance away from her home- travel could not be arranged repeatedly as this would then drain up the family's already depleted savings.

We had, time and again, attempted to contact relevant district authorities to get help. They have, however, been exceedingly slow in responding – and Mohini and her family are at a loss in the midst of these dire times.

8. NEVER ENDING PAIN FOR MARGINALISED

Raj is a native of Bhind, a small town in Madhya Pradesh. Hailing from the Dalit community, he is the only earning member in his family of six. Raj's story is one of hardship being meted out by unchecked power of local authorities, one in which Dalits end up being at the receiving end.

A factory worker in Pune, Raj was able to study up till the twelfth grade. He earned a meagre daily wage of Rs. 350 while working there. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, his factory underwent retrenchment causing him to lose his job. While in Maharashtra, he had tried seeking help from relevant authorities for a train reservation for Bhind- this, however, was met with no response whatsoever and Raj found himself traveling back by a truck which he had to arrange with his already depleting savings.

The woes did not come to an end at Betul. What faced him here was even worse- the monetary help which was extended by the state government never reached him. As he would tell our volunteers, the Sarpanch of his village would take away all the monetary benefits by forcing the villagers to sign on an unofficial document and threatened them with forbidding their entry on their own lands if they chose to act otherwise. Raj, and several other Dalit folks like him, have no control to protect themselves from these oppressive and corrupt forces. He is now left with neither a job nor any financial support from the local authorities and is in dire need of help.

9. A RAINBOW AT THE END OF THE STORM?

Santosh comes from Bamori, a small village situated in Sagar. A Bahujan man, he used to work in the construction industry and earned a daily wage of Rs. 500. He has, since the course of our calls to understand his situation and to locate possible sources of help, moved to Delhi where he works in an irregular setting with daily earnings having dropped to Rs. 250-300. Santosh's story at his hometown, however, is far more concerning given the degree of institutional apathy he has met.



Photo 6: Pandemic has largely affected the livelihood of construction workers

Post lockdown, and with great difficulty, Santosh had managed to get home. Upon arrival and post quarantine, his first step was to seek some financial help from his gram panchayat as was promised by schemes to provide immediate relief- but this was of no avail. The Gram Panchayat office, which he first entered with hope, soon became a place of despair. Whenever he made a visit to present his pleas, he was asked to run errands, buy tea and snacks for officials working there (and sent back with the hope that his request will be taken up later).

These mindless and degrading errands spanned several months- all of which Santosh tolerated for his family's sake. Our volunteers, upon information, attempted to reach out help by contacting district authorities at the higher level to help him issue his ration card. Post our intervention, appropriate directions had been issued by the relevant authorities to help Santosh.

This intervention is by no means a happy ending- presently, with the job in Delhi, not a lot has improved. Asides being separated from his family, he is unable to manage even daily necessities for himself.

10. RAKESH: A RAY OF HOPE

Rakesh is from a small village called Belkhedi, in the Sehpura Tehsil of Jabalpur. He was a supervisor in a reputed company, earning around 17,000 rupees a month for his livelihood. Soon, however, Covid struck, and he had to come back to his village owing to insufficient means of sustenance. Rakesh has a diploma and an excellent command over maths and science. When contacted, we were introduced to a heart-warming story. Speaking to us, he said that once he came back, he was moved by the situation of the school students in his village who mostly failed in Maths and English, leaving their basic education hanging by a thread. These children dropped out of school as early as after 8th and 10th standard. In an entirely selfless gesture, he did not ask us for employment but for support to start coaching and better education for these children, where he could teach them Maths and Science free of cost. Moved by Rakesh's noble intentions, our volunteers crowdfunded and sent books, pens, and pencils for his students.

Rakesh now wants to bring about constructive change in his village. In these unpredictable, almost apocalyptic times, Rakesh has been a ray of shining hope, reflective of all the good that human beings can do in the world. His story has served to remind us as to why we do undertake this initiative.



Photo 7: Rakesh providing stationery to his student with the support of our volunteers

ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE 1 – CATEGORY

CATEGORIES GROUP	RESPONSES RECEIVED (2650)	PROPORTION OF TOTAL
Scheduled Tribes (ST)	Total - 388 Schedule Tribe - 376 Adivasi - 8 Gond tribe - 3 Baiga tribe - 1	14.6%
Scheduled Caste (SC)	Total - 404 Scheduled Caste - 399 Ahirwar - 1 Harijan - 3 Khangar -1	15.2%
Other Backward Class	Total - 825 OBC- 816 Backward Class - 1 Gurjar - 1 Kurmi- 1 Lodhi - 5 Loni - 1	31.2%
General	Total - 899 General - 887 Brahamin - 2 Chaudhary - 1 General minority - 1 Garhwi Jaat Bhagel - 1 Pandit - 1 Raghuwanshi - 1 Thakur - 5	33.9%
Did not know	Total - 94 (includes people who answered unaware)	3.5%
Others	Total - 38 Did not understand - 1 Did not answer/ were uncomfortable - 16 Not sure - 6 General OBC - 5 General SC - 2 General ST - 2 Minority - 1 Sarva Dharma Sambhav - 1 OBC, SC - 3 SC, ST - 1	1.4%

ANNEXURE 2 – EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

Educational qualification	Responses received	Number of received
Less than 5th Pass	4 th pass Less than 5 th Pass TOTAL	1 79 80
5th Pass	5 th Pass 6 TH Pass 7-8 7 th 7 th Pass TOTAL	582 5 1 1 7 596
8th Pass	10 th fail 8th Pass 9 th Pass Till 9 th TOTAL	2 5 90 69 167
10th Pass	10 th Pass 11 th pass 11 th – 12 th TOTAL	993 9 1 1003
12th Pass	12 th Pass 12th done privately Studying in 12 th standard TOTAL	584 1 1 586
Diploma	Diploma 10 th ITI 12th + Diploma in Computer Application Diploma in ITI Diploma in polytechnic Diploma- mechanical Technical diploma in polytechnics TOTAL	7 1 2 1 1 1 1 14
Graduate	Graduate Last year of B.A in Hindi IT 2 nd year In second year of graduation Geography honors Final year of graduation BBA BA+ Computers Graduate (Mechanical) TOTAL	218 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 226
Post graduate	Post Graduate MA in English Graduation, MBA TOTAL	11 1 1 13
Others	Didn't specify exactly, but has studied less Didn't specify exactly Didn't tell Vague answer, but below 10th less than 10th pass	1 1 1 1 1 1 8

	Below 10th TOTAL	
Uneducated	Uneducated	203

ANNEXURE 3 – EMPLOYMENT KIND

Employment Type	Response type	No. of responses
Daily Wage	Daily wage earners	1284
Fixed Income	Fixed income	1568
	Weekly	4
	Weekly	1
	Weekly income	1
	Weekly income	2
	Weekly wages	1
	50000	1
	12000 per month	1
	8000 per month	1
	Private centre	1
	Service centre	1
	TOTAL	1582
Others	According to the work	1
	Apprentice- Easter Technology	1
	Both	1
	Business	1
	Commission based. daily around 500	1
	Depends on the work provided.	1
	Depends upon amount of work done	1
	farmer	1
	Fluctuated depending on completion of target	1
	“Does not have a particular income, whenever in need of money, takes it from boss”	1
	Looking for work when lockdown happened	
	No work	1
	Not employed	2
	Not fixed	1
	On Scholarship	2
	Part time earner	1
	Per contract	1
	Seasonal employment	1
	Self Employed	1
		1
	Transport vehicle Driver	
	Tution - based on the classes	1
	Unemployed	1
	Unemployed	2
	Unemployed, was searching for work	1
	Variable according to business	1
	Works part time with parents	1
	TOTAL	1
		29

ANNEXURE 4 - INDUSTRY

Category of Industry of Engagement	Responses received	Number of responses
Infrastructure development	Brick industry	17
	Building work	1
	Cable work	1
	Carpenter	1
	Cement factory	2
	Construction Industry	950
	Electrician	6
	Fabrication work	2
	Infrastructure construction	9
	Marble Industry	10
	Paint and waterproofing	85
	Pipe works	2
	Plumber	2
	Tile industry	5
	Welding	16
	TOTAL	1109
Manufacturing and Repairment Industry	Aluminum Manufacturing	6
	Automobile Manufacture industry	31
	Autoparts manufacturing	33
	Bag manufacturing industry	29
	Bajaj Production	4
	Battery Manufacturing	5
	Bike factory	4
	Book Binding	1
	Book making	1
	Bulb manufacturing	1
	Car mechanic	6
	Carton manufacturing	3
	Chemical industry worker	3
	Cloth factory	1
	Cobbler	2
	Computer repairing	2
	Consumer goods manufacturing company	1
	Cylinder plant	2
	Thread factory	1
	Diamond industry	2
	Dye factory	1
	Electrical Industry	37
	Engine manufacturing	1
	Factory	23
	Fan ceiling	1
	Fertilizer manufacturing	1
	Fitter- Works in the iron industry	1
	FMCG Manufacturing industry	1
	Furniture making	73
	Garment Manufacturing	140
	Glass Industry	3
	Handcrafting Fishing Net	3
	Harness Making Industry	1
	Hero Motors	1
	In mill	1
	Industrial worker at POSCO	1
	Iron industry	3
	Jewellery making	2

	LED Manufacturing Industry	1
	Machine manufacturing	4
	Machine Repairing	2
	Manufacturing Industry	14
	Mattress production	1
	Mehendi plant	1
	Metal supply industry worker	1
	Metal works	1
	Minda Corporation, Production department	1
	Mining	1
	Mobile tower parts manufacturing	1
	Nut bolt factory	1
	Nut bolt manufacturing	1
	Oil company	4
	Optical fiber making	3
	Paper cutting industry	2
	Paper manufacturing company	4
	Patching	1
	Pipe manufacturing	6
	Plastic industry	14
	Plywood industry	4
	Pot manufacturing	1
	Private factory	1
	Product repairing	1
	Repair work	1
	Repairing	1
	Ring making Industry	1
	Rubber Manufacturing industry	2
	Sack manufacturing company	1
	Some factory	1
	Some Manufacturing industry not specify	1
	Spare parts manufacturing	7
	Steel Industry	11
	Stone cutting	1
	Street Light Manufacturing	1
	System Mechanic	1
	Tailor	1
	Tank factory	3
	Tata motors	1
	Textile industry	8
	Thermocol company	1
	TV manufacturing	1
	Tire Manufacturing	1
	Used to work in a factory	1
	Washer fan parts manufacturing	1
	Wheel manufacturing	1
	Worked in a factory	1
	Worked in finnolex cable industry	1
	TOTAL	553
Agriculture and food	Agriculture	14
	Agro Industry	1
	Bakery	2
	Bar	2
	Beer shop	1
	Biscuits Industry	2
	Canteen work	8
	Catering	6
	Chilli factory	2
	Cold storage	1
	Cook	11

	Cooking oil production	1
	Dairy Industry	5
	Dalda company	1
	Dry fruits industry	37
	Eatery	2
	Farming sector	28
	Food Industry	24
	Food (Panipuri)	4
	Food (pav bhaji)	1
	Food (pizza shop)	1
	Food (street food)	2
	Grape farming	1
	Grocery shop	1
	Grocery store	1
	Ice cream parlour	1
	Ice cream making	1
	Ice factory	1
	Kitchen	4
	Meat process industry	1
	Murgi kendra	1
	Packed food manufacturing	1
	Poha factory	1
	Popcorn packing	1
	Refined oil factory	1
	Restaurant	18
	Sold chana on highway	1
	Soyabean company	1
	Sugarmill factory	1
	Sweet and snack shop	8
	Vegetable vendor	2
	Worked in domino's pizza	1
	TOTAL	204
Laborer\worker	Daily wage labour	8
	Domestic workers	228
	Helper	10
	Industrial worker	4
	Laborer	14
	Loading and unloading	4
	Private Industry worker	1
	Store worker	1
	Worked on contract basis, daily labor work	1
	Worker	2
	Worker in mill	1
	TOTAL	274
Services	Anganwadi	1
	Auto Driver	2
	Auto Garage	4
	Bank	1
	Banquet hall	1
	Businesses of post card	1
	Car driver	3
	Car driving	1
	Car wash shop	1
	Cleaning and maintenance	3
	Consultancy company	1
	Courier service	5
	Decoration	1
	Delivery service	2
	Driver	32
	E commerce	1

	Electrical Department	5
	Event Management	2
	Gunmen outside ATM	1
	Hair stylist	1
	Health Worker	2
	Horticulture (gardener)	66
	Hospital	4
	Hospitality	4
	Hotel	44
	Housekeeping	5
	In a housing society	1
	Irregular job at hotels, restaurants	2
	LP officer at a 5 star hotel	1
	Maintenance	2
	Marriage Hall employee	1
	Mumbai metro	1
	Myntra	1
	Nagar palika	1
	Office Boy	7
	Online service center	1
	Packaging work	4
	Pantry boy	1
	Pantry; Railways	1
	Pest control	1
	Postman	1
	Power plant	2
	Printing Industry	4
	Public transport (metro)	1
	Publication	1
	Railways	18
	Salon	1
	Sanitization	3
	Security	109
	Service center	1
	Software update	1
	Teacher	2
	Telecom company	4
	Transportation	7
	Travel agency	1
	Waiter	9
	Washing	1
	TOTAL	385

Operational work	Accountant	2
	Admin work	1
	Assistant in an Office	1
	Assisted in transport of grocery in shops	1
	Attendant in railways	1
	Automation company	2
	Bharat Petroleum	4
	Clerk at a Private Company	1
	Company	11
	Computer operator	3
	Data Operator	2
	Editing	1
	employed at motor vehicles showroom	1
	Employed worker	1
	Employee	1
	Engine valve: CNC operator	1
	Film Industry	3
	Gas tank Company (Machine operator)	1
	Generator company(Representative)	1
	Machine operator	25
	Manager	2
	Marketing	3
	Mechanical work	3
	Mobile cover – operator	1
	Moulding Operator	1
	Official	1
	Operator	10
	PMC machine operator	1
	Pressure operator	1
	Sales	6
	Some machine work	1
	Supervisor	10
	Technician	2
	Typist	1
	Used to work in administration of a company	1
	TOTAL	108
Others	AIGO company	1
	Any kind of work	4
	Apprentice	2
	Artist	1
	Bedani work	1
	Begari	1
	Bhajan	1
	Brush Company	1
	Bus washer	1
	Business	1
	Cashier	1
	Cheerewala	1
	Concrete	1
	Continental company	1
	Contractual work	2
	Cotton Industry	3
	Crane operator	1
	Didn't specify	4
	Embroidery	1
	Field work- supervision	1
	Finance	1
	Finding job before lockdown	1
	Foam Plant (Supreme Pvt. Ltd.)	1
	Garbage Industry	2

	Hawker	1
	Job at depo	1
	Kind of Vendor	1
	Local folk music player	1
	Logistics	3
	Machining	9
	Made poultry cases	1
	Makes his own soaps/powders and sells them	1
	Mall	1
	Medicine company	1
	Medicine shop	1
	Medicine making	1
	Merchant Navy	1
	Motor vehicle's headlight inspection	1
	Pharmaceutical company	3
	Plating	1
	Polymer	1
	Powdering	1
	Priest	3
	Private Business	1
	Private company	4
	Provided staff in hotels	1
	Quality check of two wheelers parts	1
	Random works	1
	Recreation	1
	Regulatory company	1
	Retail store	1
	Seller	1
	Shop	9
	Solar panels	1
	Splendor bike canteen	1
	Stationary	1
	stitches sports items like volleyball, basketball	1
	street vendors	2
	Thresher Machine work	1
	Towel company	1
	Transformer testing	1
	Unemployed	3
	Used to ride a tractor	1
	Used to work in shopping mall Bigbazzar	1
	Was stuck in Pune. Works in MP	1
	Wholesale market	1
	Worked at a station	1
	Worked at a supermarket	1
	Worked at farms	1
	Worked at L&T	1
	Worked for NGO	1
	Worked in a company	1
	Worked in a mall	1
	Worked in private advertising company	1
	Worked in a private company	1
	Worker at a private company	1
	Worker at Dmart	1
	Working in Airport	1
	Working in trade exports	1
	Works at car parking	1
	TOTAL	119

ANNEXURE 5 – PRE-COVID INCOME GROUP

Based on the average weighted mean method, we have taken the mean value for the group i.e. INR 225 for 200-250 group, INR 275 for 250-300 group, INR 325 for 300-350, INR 375 for 350-400, INR 450 for 400-500 group, INR 575 for 500-650 group and INR 825 for 625-1000 group except in the cases where respondents clearly mentioned their income. Additionally, for below 200 the mean income has been calculated as INR 99.48 per day while for above INR 1000/day we have assumed INR 1200 as mean income.

The mean income for 2839 respondents who informed us about their income group by aforementioned is INR 406.28/day. We have considered this income to be in Rs.350-400 group rather than 400-500 group due to its proximity with the mean of the former group.

Wage Group	Responses received (2852)	Proportion of total
Below 200 (Mean Income: INR 99.48/day)	Total - 16 3000 p.m. -1 150-200/day - 2 Less than 200/day - 1 4500 p.m. - 1 1500 p.m. - 1 150/day - 1 1500-1600 per month - 1 4000 p.m. -1 110-120/day - 1 150-200/day - 1 100-150/day - 2 20 Rs. - 1 5000 p.m. - 1 30 - 1	0.56%
Rs. 200-250 (Mean Income: INR 224.76/day)	Total - 177 (200-250) - 174 233 - 1 200 per day- 1 6000 per month - 1	6.17%
Rs. 250-300 (Mean Income: INR 274.89/day)	Total - 377 (250-300) - 372 8,000 p.m. - 5	13.21%
Rs. 300-350 (Mean Income: INR 324.84/day)	Total - 629 (300-350) - 617 300 - 4 9000 p.m. - 2 10,000 p.m. - 6	22.05%
Rs. 350-400 (Mean Income: INR 374.86/day)	Total - 597 (350-400) - 593 11,000 p.m - 1 350 per day - 3	20.9%
Rs. 400-500 (Mean Income: INR 449.02/day)	Total - 545 (400-500) - 533 12,000 p.m. - 2 13,000 p.m. - 2	19.1%

	400 per day - 8	
Rs. 500-650 (Mean Income: INR 572.15/day	Total - 334 (500-650)- 318 500 - 11 633- 1 15,000 to 18,000 p.m. - 2 15,000 p.m. - 2	11.7%
Rs. 650-1000 (Mean Income: INR 814.35/day	Total - 139 (650-1000) - 127 700 - 4 25,000 p.m. - 1 20,000 p.m. - 6 5000-6000 per week - 1	4.87%
More than Rs. 1000/day (Mean Income: INR 1203.85/day	Total - 26 More than Rs. 1000/day - 24 1500 per day - 1 30,000 p.m. - 1	0.91%
Others	Total - 13 Zero (0) - 2 Did not disclose - 4 Depended on target/current project/newly employed/ housing society watchman/never received on time/contract based/ varying - 7	0.45%

**Upper Limits are exclusive in each class (a person earning Rs. 300/day will be put in the category of 300-350 and not 250-300). For respondents who mentioned per month, we have assumed 30 days per month.

ANNEXURE 6 – TICKET FUNDING

Name of the Categories	Responses Included	Total Number (%)
Entirely funded by the government	-	1318 (57%)
Funded by the Employer/Company	Company/Employer- 18 Factory Owner- 2	20 (0.8%)
Partly Funded	96 By government-2 By employer- 1 Lifts during journey- 2	101 (4.3%)
Bought the ticket from agent at inflated prices	-	43 (1.8%)

Bought by NGO	NGO- 6 Independent Volunteers-2 Charity- 1 Sonu Sood Donation-1	11 (0.4%)
Others	Not known- 3	3 (0.1%)
		Total – 2313 (100%)

ANNEXURE 7 – TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Name of the Categories	Responses Included
Assisted by government officials and bureaucrats	977 1 - Burhanpur to Dindori (assisted by govt. officials) 9 - Bus paid by Govt 1 - Truck by Police 1 - MP Border onwards, was assisted by the Govt 1- Vidhayak's bus collected him from station and took them to nagar nigan. Nagar nigan doctors sent them home on their own 1- Partly funded by Government, had to put in additional expenses on their own as will
Had to find their own arrangements	527 43 - A vehicle purchased on his own was used to travel 6 - Auto and paid by him only. 4 – Booked a cab at their own expense. 3 – Bus purchased at their own expenses 2 – Rickshaw 1 - By taking lift from a truck from Jabalpur to home 1 - Called for a vehicle from home 6 – Car 1 – Elephant 3 – Bike 2 – Truck 1 - Vegetable transportation vehicle 1 – Train ticket purchased on own 1- The cab directly dropped sagar. 1- Self funded his whole travel of 3 days back to village be it the truck for the initial part of the journey and then a car to reach back home
Had to walk back	111 1 – Walked from the MP Border to his village
Bus	24 1 – Assisted by Bus 1-the bus reached his village
Funded by the Employer/Company	
Friends/Neighbours/Relatives/ Employer	1 – Had to call a friend to pick up 1 - Buses were availabe but went with relatives

	1 - called a relative from home 1 - Husband 1 - Employers
Helped by volunteers/NGOs/Civil societies	46 1 - A NGO organized a vehicle
If used a vehicle (who paid for it, specify below)	52
Others	1 – Stranger 1 – Didn't travel by train 1-Reached Indore in private bus and from there to Sagar in government bus. 1-None 1-Not applicable- 1- The same vehicle mentioned above 1- Went to quarantine centre initially for 7 days

8 people marked “yes, no” for which we have considered five marking ‘yes’ and three making ‘no’. The rationale is that those 5 have answered other questions related to food, time taken by train etc which suggests they might have been in a train.

ANNEXURE 8 – TRAVEL TIME

Only the uncategorized responses have been highlighted in this Annexure.

Response	Categorised	Number
3 Days- Took more than 48 hrs but does not remember the name of the train	48-72 Hours	2 1
Don't remember	Others	1
Not sure		1
Stopped at Bhusawal for over 12 hours due to maintenance		1
Stopped in the middle of nowhere for 24 hours. Received food only once in the whole journey		1

ANNEXURE 9 – REGISTRATION IN HOME STATE

Category Name	Response received	Number of responses
Yes	Yes	1761
	Yes he did register himself but got no job	1
	they were asked to give photocopy of passbook and train ticket and normal check up was done	1
	The sarpanch had all the details	1
	The Gram Panchayat had a record of number of migrants came back	1
	Sarpanch took information regarding bank account no.	1
	sarpanch asked for bank details	1

	Sachiv noted details, took Aadhar and pass book details	1
	Registration was done in the village	1
	registration undertaken by sarpanch took the passbook	1
	Panchayat knew	1
	He reached the village and informed the sarpanch himself	1
	Gram Panchayat took some information, not sure if that was a part of registration	1
	TOTAL	1773
No	No	796
Don't remember	Don't remember.	190
Others	They told him to stay away from them since he had come from Maharashtra	1
	The driver of the vehicle was harassed	1
	only information regarding health	1
	In a government hospital.	1
	TOTAL	4

ANNEXURE 10 – STATUS OF CHILDRENS EDUCATION

Name of the Categories	Responses Included	Total Number (%)
Children have always lived and studies in MP only (i.e. even before the pandemic)	489	524
	Attending online classes, MP- 1	
	Not attending school/ Dropped out/ Couldn't get admission (MP) - 4	
	No classes being held (MP) - 2	
	Don't have access to smartphones (MP) - 20	
	Children are enrolled in government school however the schools are not open and no online classes are being conducted (MP) - 1	
	Children are enrolled in nearby institutions now (MP) - 3	
	Children are enrolled in nearby institutions now, Children doesn't have access to smartphones/internet for Online Classes (MP) - 2	
	Too young for school (MP) - 2	
Children were enrolled in Maharashtra and have to drop out of school/college	121	148
	Studying (Maha.) - 2	
	Doing online classes (Maha.) - 1	

	Children are enrolled in nearby institutions now (Maha.) - 7 No classes being held (Maha.) -1 Children doesn't have access to smartphones/internet for Online Classes (Maha.) -12 Children are enrolled in nearby institutions now, Children doesn't have access to smartphones/internet for Online Classes (Maha.) - 1 Left studies to contribute to family income (Maha.) - 3	
Children are enrolled in nearby institutions now	87	97
	Children doesn't have access to smartphones/internet for Online Classes- 9 Have access to online classes- 1	
Children doesn't have access to smartphones/internet for Online Classes	96	97
	Children doesn't have access to smartphones/internet for Online Classes, Sending them to private Tuitions- 1	
Others	Too young for school- 79 Unmarried or have no children- 107 Not studying/Dropped out/No classes being held/No admissions – 26 Attending online classes/Studying - 17 Finished schooling- 2 8 y/o daughter- 1 One child, 5 y/s old-1 Has two sisters, who are studying in Class 9th and 11th-1 Dehadi workers- 1 Depend on situation- 1 Everyone is working- 1 He did not answer this question- 2 Married kids- 2 NA-1	246

	None- 3 Working in Maharashtra- 1	
	TOTAL	1112

ANNEXURE 11 – CURRENT LOCATION

Current location state	Responses received (2917)	Proportion of Total
Home State (Madhya Pradesh)	Total - 2184 Home State (M.P.) - 2178 Beohari - 1 Home state (M.P.), Employment and native place in the same state, different districts - 1 Home state (M.P.), Gajwahar Village- 1 Jhabua, Indore (MP) - 1 Katani - 1 Shahdol - 1	74.87%
Host State (where they worked earlier)	Total - 574 Host State where they worked earlier - 567 Host state where they worked earlier, Solapur - 1 Maharashtra - 2 Nagpur - 1 Pune - 2 Went back to host state but a different place i.e. Nashik - 1	19.67%
A new state altogether	Total - 141 A new state altogether -129 A new state altogether, Chattisgarh -2 A new state altogether, Gujarat - 3 A new state altogether, Haryana - 1 A new state altogether, Rajasthan - 2 A new state altogether, Hyderabad, Telangana- 1 Bihar - 2 Delhi -1	4.8%
Others	Total - 18	0.61%

	Home state (M.P.), A new state altogether -4 Home state (M.P.), Home state Uttar Pradesh - 1 Home state (M.P.), Host state where they worked earlier - 8 Home state (M.P.), Will shift soon back to MP - 1 Host state where they worked earlier, A new state altogether - 3 Travelled to Patna and not MP in the 1st place- 1	
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ANNEXURE 12 - REASONS FOR MOVING OUT OF HOST STATE

Reason for moving out	Responses received (2655)	Proportion of total
Forced to leave due to the fear of COVID	Total - 729 Forced to leave due to the fear of COVID - 724 Due to the fear of COVID - 2 Family was concerned about the safety of constant field work, her job required to do so; asked her to come back - 1 He was called by his family members due to the fear of COVID- 1 He was supposed to come back due to covid but was not informed of the train - 1	27.45%
Loss of employment and no means of sustenance in the host state	Total - 1706 Loss of employment and no means of sustenance in the host state - 1699 Fear of having no job - 1 Loss of employment and loss of employment - 1 Loss of employment, no work and death of his mother - 1 no food - 1 Other family members were earning, once their Employment stopped, they had to move out - 1 Since everything was under lockdown and had no job, so didn't have enough money to even afford their food - 1 Starved for 3-4 days without food in the host state - 1	64.25%
Moved out of own free will	Total - 181	6.81%

	Moved out of own free will - 180 Came by choice - 1	
Both, fear of covid and loss of Employment	Total - 7 1st and 3rd option - 2 Both, fear of COVID and loss of employment - 1 Fear of covid and loss of employment- 1 Loss of employment and fear of corona - 2 Loss of job and fear of covid - 1	0.26%
Others	Total - 23 all the family members came back to their village - 1 better opportunities for work in Maharashtra, higher salaries- 1 Due to emergency - 1 Family being in M.P. - 2 Had a marriage at house so came back but was not able to return due to Covid - 1 He is in Punjab now -1 He was told to come back to home by his family members - 1 He went there to pick someone but due to lockdown, he had to stay there and during that time, he did work there. But anyway, he is a migrant worker - 1 Lack of employment opportunities in Madhya Pradesh. - 1 Landlord forced to evict - 1 Lockdown - 2 Medical Emergency - 1 on their own also - 1 Personal issues - 1 This guy wanted to work and did not give shit about corona but he was super scared about his family that is why he moved out - 1 Transfer - 1 Visiting their daughter in Pune - 1 Wanted to stay with family in home state - 1 Will go back to Maharashtra after Diwali - 1 called by the earlier company at Delhi- 1 just to visit his family - 1	0.86%

	Didn't have employment earlier as well as now	1
	Didn't really have any expectations	1
	Didn't think anything	1
	Either could have been done	2
	Facilities and job in MP	1
	get job under MGNREGA	1
	get a job	1
	Get the compensation money but got no money	1
	Good jobs in Maharashtra and in MP less wage is paid in comparison	1
	Government will provide them job in MP to make a living and will get compensation (in terms of money) of 15 days self isolation under MGNREGA but they did not get anything	1
	Have to go back to collect luggage	1
	Have to go out to earn	1
	He came back to Maharashtra but wanted to find work in MP	1
	He didnt know what to make of the situation as he was not much aware other than the fact that he needs to make it back to his family	1
	He expected to receive some work in MP, but had to relocate due to no work opportunities	1
	He never thought about this question.	1
	He said he had alot of expectations but didnt receive any kind of help from anyone.	1
	he wanted a job and his compensation money	1
	if they get proper job(Ghar pe kon rehna nahi chahta)	1
	job facilities in MP	1
	Knew that have to earn in order to sustain living.	1
	Lost all hopes. Did not think about job	1
	No	1
	No expectations of job. He just wanted the compensation money promised by the CM	1
	No sure	1
	Not confirmed. no jobs in MP. Company shut down in Maharashtra	1
	Not sure, depended upon availability of employment	1
	nothing	1
	Nothing fixed, they would do according to the opportunities presented to them	1
	Nothing he just wanted to go home safely without spending his own money	1
	Now they're too scared to go out of the village because of the insufficient and unfair treatment they faced by the Government	1
	Shiv is only 22 and has aspiration to pursue further study.	1
	He wants to enroll in a private job so that he can continue studying while earning. If he finds this private job within Madhya Pradesh he would prefer that. He mentioned how mobility is restricted in Maharashtra and the cost of living is comparatively high. However, if he is unable to find a job here, he will move to any place that provides him with a stable job and education.	1
	stay depended upon availability of employment	1
	that he will get a job to sustain	1
	There were no expectations as he called helpline numbers but got no help so he kept no further expectations	1
		1

	They didn't have a fix decision about it, they would do what was necessary and according to what opportunities were presented to them	1
	They travel to other states to sell their produce and hence was in Pune when the lockdown started	1
	to get a job	1
	Uncertain	1
	Want to look for work closer to home	1
	Were he get job	1
	Wherever he finds job	1
	Will decide as required, did not make fixed plans	1
	will get a job	1
	will get compensation money but haven't received anything	
	will move according to the job	1
	Will return only if they are sure of employment	1
	Willing to move out if unable to find a job	1
	TOTAL	80

ANNEXURE 14 – REASONS TO MOVE OUT OF MP AFTER LOCKDOWN RELAXATIONS

Reason for relocation	Responses received (947)	Proportion of Total
Employment	Total - 873 Employment - 870 Education and Employment - 1 Employment but he still dosen't have a job - 1 Had no money, need to payback loans - 1	92.18%
Family being in other state	Total - 30 Family being in other state - 30	3.16%
Safety from Covid	Total - 35 Safety from Covid - 35	3.69%
Others	Total - 9 Did not move out - 2 Going back after Diwali - 1 He hasn't moved out of Katni and now wishes to stay at his home town for the rest of his life - 1 Not interested - 1 Still residing in MP, looking for employment - 1 will be leaving and going back to Maharashtra for employment - 1 willing to come back, due to fear of covid - 1 With family - 1	0.95%

ANNEXURE 15 – CURRENT INDUSTRY

Category of Industry of Engagement	Responses received	Number of responses
Infrastructure development	Building work	1
	100 days scheme	1
	100 days work was provided by gram panchayat	1
	Company-bridge covering	1
	Construction industry	217
	Construction industry, Farmer	5
	Construction Industry, Tower line	2
	Daily wage labour, construction industry	33
	Daily wage Labour, construction industry, farmers	7
	Daily wage Labour, construction industry, farmers, unemployed	3
	Daily wage Labour, construction industry, Unemployed	3
	Marble industry	1
	Mason	1
	Mistry work	1
	Paint and waterproofing	11
	Plumber	1
	Road construction	1
	Soil loading	1
	Sometimes Gram Panchayat provides for work	2
	Tile industry	1
	Waterproofing	1
	Welding	6
	Whatever work is provided by the Panchayat	1
	Work given by panchayat	1
	Worker at metro cabin construction company.	1
	Worker- Construction	
	TOTAL	1
		305
Manufacturing and Repairment Industry	Aluminum plant	1
	Automobile industry	2
	Auto parts factory	4
	Battery factory	1
	Car repair	1
	Chemical industry	2
	Chemical plant	1
	Clothes maker	1
	Electric shop	1
	Electrical	3
	Electrical industry	1
	Electrical manufacturing industry (same job as before)	1
	Electrician	2
	Electronics	1
	Fabrication work	2
	Factory	1
	Furniture industry	1
	Garment Industry	11
	Loha cutting	1
	manufacturing company	1
	Manufacturing industry	1
	Manufacturing industry - steel plants	1
	Manufacturing Plant Maintenance	1
	Motor vehicle related work	1

	Once he goes back, he will be employed again in the automobile parts company he worked for.	1
	Opened an electronic shop	1
	Pipe making industry	2
	Plastic company	1
	Plastic Industry	1
	Plastic molding	1
	Regulator manufacturing	1
	Repairing	1
	Spare parts manufacturing	1
	Steel industry	1
	Tailor	1
	Textile Industry	6
	Thread industry	2
	Tyre manufacturing	1
	Vehicle manufacturing industry	1
	TOTAL	65
Agriculture and food	Biscuit industry	1
	Biscuit factory	1
	Cook at rutugandh resort	1
	Dairy	2
	Does some farming - but does not seem to have a job - is quite old	1
	Eatery	1
	Farmer	275
	Farmer, - not earning - waiting to go back	1
	Farmer, He does farming	1
	Farmer, own	1
	Farmer, own	1
	Farmer, Unemployed	14
	Farmer, Works in her own field.	1
	Farming in ancestral land	1
	Farming in her own field	1
	Farming, labour	1
	Food industry	1
	Food stall	1
	Ganna mandi	1
	Grocery shop	2
	Has a tea stall and occasionally sells vegetables	1
	He has opened an egg shop	1
	He makes cake	1
	Helping brother in farming	1
	Helping father run a small chicken shop	1
	Helping his father in the khet	1
	Oil manufacturing industry	1
	Own field	1
	Raisin manufacturing	1
	Restaurant	1
	Sells fruits and vegetables	1
	Sugarcane factory	1
	Sweetshop	2
	Vegetable seller	1
	Works in a sweet shop	1
	Works in his own field	9
	TOTAL	334
Laborer\worker	A factory labour	1
	As a helper in a private shop	1
	.Daily wage eaner	1
	Daily wage employee	1
	Daily wage labour	404

	Daily wage labourer, bus worker	1
	Daily wage Labour, Farmers	16
	Daily wage Labour, Farmer, Unemployed	1
	Daily wage Labour, in a nearby factory	1
	Daily wage Labour, makes tobacco.	1
	Daily wage Labour, Not provided with work regularly	1
	Daily wage Labour, odd jobs- does driving on some days, and farming on some	1
	Daily wage Labour, Oil Company	2
	Daily wage Labour, same job of a driver but has been called for just one month	1
	Daily wage Labour, Unemployed	5
	Daily wage Labour, Unemployed, Gets a meagre job once a month. Earns 200 or less for that month. Otherwise family living on ration provided by the government.	1
	Daily wage Labour, works in a Chicken Shop	
	Daily wage worker	1
	Domestic clerk	1
	Domestic worker	1
	Domestic work	9
	Employes in some garment shop	1
	Factory Labor	1
	Helper	6
	Labor	1
	Publication line worker	2
	Shop worker	1
	Shop keeper	1
	Working in a friend's shop	2
	Working in a shop	1
	working in his farm	1
	working on and off - nothing much	1
	works in hardware store	1
	TOTAL	1
		471
Services	At barber shop	1
	Auto Driver	1
	Auto garage	1
	Bank	1
	Barber	1
	Car wash shop	1
	Driver	9
	E commerce	1
	Employed at petrol pump	1
	Garage worker	3
	Hair stylist	1
	He is running a salon - cutting hair etc until he finds something	1
	He cuts grass in Pune. gets daily wage for it.	1
	Hospital	1
	Hotel	1
	Hotel	1
	Hotel Industry	1
	Hotel worker	1
	Hotel worker.	1
	Horticulture (Maali)	3
	Jio line	1
	Laundry man	1
	Maintenance staff	1
	Mumbai metro	1
	Office boy	1

	Office peon	1
	Office staff helper	1
	Office worker	1
	Petrol pump	1
	Power plant(contract work)	1
	Rickshaw driver	1
	Sales	2
	Salon	1
	Security agency	8
	Servant	2
	Shop maintenance	1
	Sweeping	1
	Telecommunications	1
	Train canteen	1
	Transport	1
	Travel agency	1
	Tuition teacher	1
	Waiter	2
	Works in a hotel	1
	TOTAL	66
Operational work	Accountant	1
	Automation company	1
	Chap machine operator	1
	Job	3
	Lupin company	1
	Machine operator	5
	Operates press machine	1
	Operating	1
	Operator	1
	Operator at Kendi Vindra Nigam, Bhopal	1
	PMC machine operator	1
	Shop supervisor	1
	Tank Operator in factory	1
	Works as an accountant	1
	TOTAL	20
Others	Apprentice	1
	Business	2
	Cloth shop	1
	Clothing store	1
	Company	1
	Construction industry, farmer, unemployed	1
	Construction industry, security officer	1
	Contract	1
	Cotton industry	1
	Currently came for puja at home state	1
	Digging	1
	Does the same work he did before	1
	Does whatever job is available for the day	1
	Earning differs from day to day; no constant source	1
	Employed at the same company they were working at	1
	Engages in different kinds of work	1
	Fixed income	2
	Got the job back at the company	1
	He does bit of work on a off	1
	He still gets some amount from the place he used to work in previously	1
	Garment store	1
	Household work	1
	In a garment shop	2
	Jobless	1

	Kabaddi	1
	Makes his own soaps/powders and sells them on a daily basis	1
	Makes painting	1
	Mandi	1
	Monthly	1
	Nearby shop	1
	No work	1
	Own shop	1
	Own a grocery shop	1
	Pandit	1
	Pharmaceutical	1
	Previous employer	1
	Previous workplace	2
	Private company	2
	Rides tractor	1
	Same as before	21
	Searching for job in indore	1
	Self business	1
	Self employed	1
	Self employed - mill worker	1
	Self employed in garment business, but no income since moving back to host state last month	1
	Some shop	1
	Sometimes he get work, sometime he doesn't get. His elder son is also trying to make a living for his family.	1
	Street vendor	1
	Student	1
	Work in their own shop	1
	Works in a medicine company	1
	Works in some private company	1
	TOTAL	77
Unemployed	Unemployed	295
	Unemployed, company closed	1
	Unemployed, farming for the family	1
	TOTAL	297

ANNEXURE 16 - CURRENT INCOME GROUP

Based on the average weighted mean method, we have taken mean value for the group except in the cases respondents provided accurate number on their income. Additionally, for below 200 the mean income has been calculated as INR 127.73 day while for above INR 1000/day we have assumed INR 1200 as mean income.

The mean income for 1209 respondents who informed us about their income group by aforementioned is INR 339.51/day. We have considered this income as average income to be in Rs.300-350 group.

Wage Group	Responses Received (1306)	Proportion of Total
Below 200 (Mean Income: INR 127.73/day)	Total - 68	5.2%
	30 - 1	
	100-1	
	150- 7	
	180-1	
	100/- per day or sometimes less than that - 1	

	100/day - 6 1000/week - 1 100-150 - 15 100-200 - 3 130-140/day - 1 133/day - 1 1500 per month - 1 1500-1600 per month - 1 150-200/day - 3 180-190/day - 1 190-200/day - 1 5000 a month - 1 800 from one home - 1 (monthly) a little less than 200/pay - 1 Around 120/day- 1 Around Rs 100-140/day for whenever they get a job - 1 gets less than 20 , does odd jobs here and there nothing which is steady flow of income-1 Less than 100- 1 less than 140 per day and only on the day then manage to get a job - 1 Less than 150/day - 4 Less than 200 - 3 minimum wages 100-150/ - 1 150-160/day - 1 5000/month - 1 Rs 50/100/150 day (Depends on the work he gets to do)-1 Rs. 100/day- 1 Rs. 110/day - 1 Rs. 130/day - 1 they currently receive a little less that 200/day - 1	
Rs 200-250/day (Mean Income: INR 224.96/day)	Total - 402 Rs. 200-250/day - 398 Currently, he gets 6,000 monthly-1 Rs 200-250/day, not even 200 some days -1 Rs 200-250/day, sometimes less than 200 - 1 Rs 7000/month - 1	30.7%
Rs 250-300/day (Mean Income: INR 276.54/day)	Total- 9 250-300/day - 3 270/day - 1 8000 - 10,000 -1 8000/month - 2 8500 per month - 1 Rs 250-300/day -1	0.68%

Rs 300-350/day (Mean Income: INR 324.44/day)	Total - 267 Rs 300-350/day - 261 300/day - 3 9000 per month - 1 9000/month wage- 2	20.44%
Rs 350-400/day (Mean Income: INR 374.86/day)	Total - 181 Rs 350-400/day - 180 350/day - 1	13.85%
Rs 400-500/day (Mean Income: INR 449.27/day)	Total - 160 Rs 400-500/day - 157 433 - 1 400/day - 2	12.25%
Rs 500-650/day (Mean Income: INR 572.59/day)	Total - 83 Rs 500-650/day - 79 18,000 per month - 1 500/day - 3	6.35%
Rs 650-1000/day (Mean Income: INR 675/day)	Total - 31 Rs 650-1000/day - 31	2.37%
More than 1000/day (Mean Income: INR 1175/day)	Total - 8 More than 1000/day - 7 1000/day - 1	0.61%
Others	Total - 97 Barely earns anything- 1 Barely earns anything and that to not guaranteed- 1 Cant say - 2 Chose not to disclose - 1 Depends - 2 Doesn't have a fixed income, but makes do with his own savings of food and money - 1 Don't know- 2 Educating children by taking loans. NO EARNING - 1 Family mill - 1 farming - 1 Farming on family land. Not sure of income-1 get paid according to the work- 1 Hard to say - 1 He didn't have a particular income, whenever he was in need of some, he would take it from his boss- 1 He didn't say -2 He works in his own farm-1 Helping brother in farming - 1 Irregular - 3 Minimum wages - 1	7.42%

	N/A (mostly farming people) - 5 Negligible, whenever any work arises - 1 No earning - 2 No employment as promised by the government - 1 No fixed income, does random jobs once a month - 1 No idea- 1 No money/income - 3 no work now, will get paid only after harvest- 1 Not applicable -1 Not fixed - 1 Not sure, husband lives far and she doesn't work- 1 nothing guaranteed or consistent for him to be able to answer this question - 1 Only food for sustenance- 1 preferred not to disclose - 1 receives less than what he used to put didn't want to say exact amount-1 Rs 200-250/day, Rs 300-350/day - 11 Rs 200-250/day, Rs 300-350/day, Rs 350-400/day - 5 Rs 200-250/day, Rs 350-400/day - 3 Rs 200-250/day, Rs 400-500/day- 1 Rs 300-350/day, Rs 350-400/day-9 Rs 300-350/day, Rs 350-400/day, Rs 400-500/day-2 Rs 300-350/day, Rs 400-500/day- 3 Rs 350-400/day, Rs 400-500/day- 4 Rs 400-500/day, Rs 500-650/day- 3 Rs 500-650/day, Rs 650-1000/day-1 Rs 650-1000/day, More than 1000/day-1 Sales not started yet-1 Started a business just a week ago-1 uncertain income- 1 Unemployed-1 whatever negligible work comes up-1 whatever work comes up-1 Zero income-1	
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****Upper Limits are exclusive in each class (a person earning Rs. 300/day will be put in the category of 300-350 and not 250-300)**

ANNEXURE 17 – EMPLOYMENT SCHEME IN HOME STATE

Only the non categorized responses have been mentioned in this annexure.

Panchayat	1- Work given to migrant workers by Panchayat. 1- The nagar parshad of that area got him a job in the 'Chuna Ghara' sector in the nagar nigam 1- Received assistance from Panchayat. 2- Panchayat
Others	1- Ration Card 1- he has a BPL card - and gets ration - has to feed 8 people - his sons family as well
Don't know	1- They don't know the scheme but they got some monetary relief. 1- The person did not mention any specific schemes. 1- Gali plug

ANNEXURE 18 – FUTURE EMPLOYMENT: OTHERS

Already moved out	75												
Can't say	10												
Depends on the situation/Flexible/ Any place if work is provided	99												
Want to move out	1137												
Want to stay in M.P. only	1502												
Others	7 Details of these 7 responses are: <table> <tr> <td>EMPLOYED</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>for better employment opportunities</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>place of employment</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>Place of employment and native place in the same state</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Requested for a Government Job(Sarkari Naukari)</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>they are expecting a call back from the previous employers when the lockdown ends</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	EMPLOYED	1	for better employment opportunities	1	place of employment	2	Place of employment and native place in the same state	1	Requested for a Government Job(Sarkari Naukari)	1	they are expecting a call back from the previous employers when the lockdown ends	1
EMPLOYED	1												
for better employment opportunities	1												
place of employment	2												
Place of employment and native place in the same state	1												
Requested for a Government Job(Sarkari Naukari)	1												
they are expecting a call back from the previous employers when the lockdown ends	1												

